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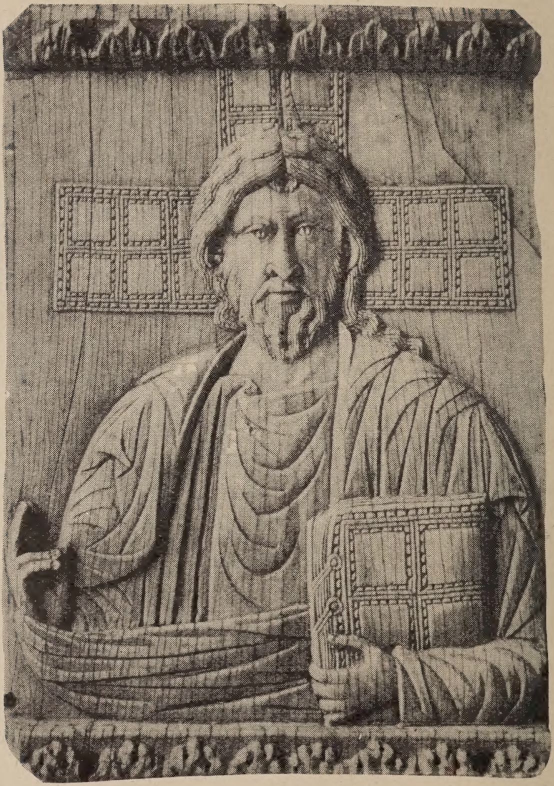
# EVERY MAN'S STORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT



‘MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU.’

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# EVERY MAN'S STORY
OF
# THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY
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DEAR MESSRS. MOWBRAY,

When six years ago you invited me to write for Every Man about the Old Testament I found much happiness in the advice, help, and I would fain say friendship, you extended to me. With two of your society I enjoyed special intimacy. One of those two has entered into his rest. The other loves him and knows the value of his accomplished work. And in this new task with which I am so honourably entrusted my achievement will be tried by their high standard ; but, as experience has already proved, with no less kindness than before.

This is the same kind of book as the former, yet with a difference. The New Testament is more generally known than the Old Testament. Its importance is more vital. All go more seriously into it and try to find an honest answer to the question, Is the Gospel true ? Is Jesus Christ indeed the Saviour ? Therefore I have ventured to write somewhat closer to the sense, in some degree to go beyond what is elementary. If *Every Man's Story of the Old Testament* was adapted to Every Man as reader of the daily papers, *Every Man's Story of the New Testament* is designed for readers of the New Testament itself. It is as plainly written as the subject allows, but it seeks thoughtful readers.

Will you, dear Sirs, accept the dedication of the book in token of sincere respect and gratitude from the author.

ALEXANDER NAIRNE.

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# EVERY MAN'S STORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

## INTRODUCTION

IF we could read the New Testament now for the first time, how fresh and original it would seem ! Here is a history, not saddening but invigorating. Here is a promise, and an assurance of its fulfilment already inaugurated in the history. The promise is of the most perfect happiness that can be. The assurance is of the greatest importance : it exalts our whole view of life. Is it true ? Can it be trusted ?

How ; by whom ; when were these books written ? Some of the books are letters, and come to us as contemporary voices from the history, especially those which bear the name of Paul. Who is this Paul ? The Gospels illuminate his continuous subject, Jesus Christ : Acts his own life. But Paul and Acts are retrospective. One Gospel is composed by the same author as Acts, and he claims to have ascertained what he records from actors and eyewitnesses of the events. This and another Gospel depend upon a third, for Matthew and Luke incorporate in their longer works the story told by Mark. But whence come these titles, Matthew, Luke, Mark ? What ground is there for accepting these documents as real history ?

A fourth Gospel, which is linked with three letters, is entitled ' according to John,' a name which is an integral part of one of the letters, and again of the last book of the New Testament volume. This, the Book of Revelation or Apocalypse, is prophetic in character. Its last verses sound like the conclusion of an era, and this whole Johannine group seems to belong to the later part of the New Testament period, a period which coincides with the first century of Christianity. The Johannine Gospel presupposes the three former Gospels. It is retrospective, explanatory, meditative.

There are other letters or epistles. All the books bear names which are found in the Gospels or in Paul's epistles. One of these remaining epistles is dependent on another in the group, and the writer quotes, appreciates, and criticizes Paul's letters. The whole group seems to belong to the later years of the period.

These and like considerations form the outline of modern criticism. Many books have been written to introduce, explain, or summarize this criticism. *Every Man's Story of the New Testament* will not be shaped to that end. It would be superfluous to attempt again what so many have done well. And well as these have done, there is a doubt and difficulty about summaries and estimations of critical results. Criticism is still fluid and even uncertain ; perhaps wisely forbidden to clear quite away the sanctity and awe which belong to another and a higher mode of life—a life within a life.

Criticism should be our own. The masters in the art direct us, but each one of ourselves must exercise his own judgement at last, studying the sacred text for himself more than the books about it. Criticism is the approach to the great question, Who is Jesus Christ ? What has He done for men ? What is He still doing ? Is He indeed the Saviour of the world ?

A missionary told this tale of his mission to the Sikhs, whom he found an intelligent people. He visited a village and set forth the Gospel story. One man asked for a New Testament to keep and read. Some time after, the missionary returned and the Sikh said to him : ‘ I have read your book and am immensely impressed by the character of your Lord Jesus. But there is a question I must ask. The book says that He died and rose from the dead. Now no other man has ever been known to do that. What reason is there for believing that this man did so, except that it is asserted in the book itself ? ’ The missionary only added to his tale the comment, ‘ From this you may see how intelligent the Sikhs are.’ But no doubt he offered reasons to his friend : he introduced criticism to him ; criticism as the way of satisfaction for a yearning heart.

To some extent criticism does afford additional reason for trust. It does establish some history. But it also obscures some things that are taken for granted or on authority : it accentuates some doubts.

Critical reading is careful reading. The whole New Testament read through and through, often, with severe honesty, yet with generous wonder, reveals a consistency of truth. The truth thus adumbrated corresponds with twenty centuries of historical experience subsequently. Yet part of that experience mars the correspondence : Christianity sometimes appears to fail.

Deeper, though less communicable, is another correspondence, the correspondence of the Gospel assurance with the several readers’ conscience, with ‘ the doom of reason writ in man’s soul and heart.’

*Every Man’s Story of the New Testament* will keep these correspondences in the background. Yet the background will be pregnant, supplying vitality to the story. The plan will be to trace the story through its course, mindful of contemporary criticism but seldom discussing it, exercising personal criticism but generally without ostentation. The main design will be to follow the story as a movement, and to display the growing revelation of its inner significance.

Every Man is a theologian. For a theologian is man, conscious of sin and impotence, yearning for goodness, and willing to spend pains on examining the assurance that Jesus Christ is the Saviour. There is good hope of confirming the assurance as the story naturally and unaffectedly progresses. But that will not be effected at once, at the start. It will emerge by degrees. It will be perfected—so far as perfection is possible in the demonstration of such sanctities—only in the conclusion; which conclusion will prove to be itself a fresh inauguration of the era of faith. And Every Man as he reads must take patiently the tentative, even unwelcome, sometimes perhaps erroneous treatment of things in the earlier chapters. Then at the end will he still think back leisurely, and make up his mind about the whole?

The course of the Gospel is like a river. The source is fed by manifold influences, from far and near, hidden or visible. From the source the stream springs among the hills. There it runs purely and delightfully. Thence through a chasm it falls in cataract; and sweeps on as a river, enlarged and deepened by tributaries, fertilizing wide lands. Then dissipated, retarded, strained to rarer purity in the sands, it debouches at last into the sea.

The Gospel spring and stream is in Galilee. Below, behind, is the Old Testament, the Law and the Prophets, the Christ and the Day of the Lord and the Kingdom of God ; also all that rude piety, that dream of what was and is and ever shall be which composes the very being of man as man; and all that ardour and yearning which in the West is Plato and in the East is Buddha or Atman. But in Galilee these old motives are newly created. All is fresh, joyous, and full of wonder ; yet homely, human, and natural ; the Master and His disciples ; grace of conversation, loyalty of following, patience of instruction, authority of example, compassion on the multitude ; but also something not seen but eternal, heart answering to heart, life within life, love developing into spiritual union. As yet the Spirit is little talked about : that will come presently when the visible presence takes tremendous change : as yet the Son in His own very human character is drawing brothers to come with Him to the Father by the ways of daily use and wont.

Then comes the tremendous change, the gathering gloom, the cataract of death, gradually recognized as heroic, sacrificial, life-restoring. The promise of the Spirit precedes the death, and is fulfilled in the invisible communion of indissoluble life. Disciples become Apostles. The ' Spirit of Jesus ' is the new life of the expanding community. ' The name of remembrance is hope.'

The agent of expansion is S. Paul. Through him the stream of Galilee swells into the river of the missionary period. In the first half of his career he is missionary, carrying the Judaic-Christian Gospel to Gentiles in Syria and Europe. Then, a prisoner at Rome, meditating at leisure, the ' ambassador,' he expands the faith, hitherto confined by inherited traditions of the Jewish Church, to a grand theology.

The Spirit elaborates it from within : Paul's own experience has been inward, ‘not according to the flesh,’ beyond capacity of speech : hence his imagery of speech is boldly rhetorical. His Pharisaic ancestry influenced his expression both impulsively and by reaction. His genial charity led him to welcome Gentile modes of piety, as well as to discipline Gentile morals. And his habit of command led him to rapid organization of the Christian societies, with practical novelties of rule yet conformably to the accustomed usage of the synagogue. His theology was seemingly scholastic, reconciliation of man with God effected for man by Christ dying and rising; really inward and personal, crucifixion of self with Christ and union closer than flesh and blood can mediate.

Paul’s own death was a martyrdom which sealed his metaphors with reality. Hitherto the Roman Empire had been the patron of the Christian mission. Now it becomes the persecutor. A time of trial ensues. And the pressure refines the Christian Faith. Sufferings turn thought back to happy Galilee and the example of the Master. S. Paul’s ‘not after the flesh’ changes to remembrance of ‘the days of his flesh.’ And in those lowly days and ways, and in the shame of the Cross, the glory of deity is recognized according to the heavenly measurement as glory in humiliation. Hence a simpler, profounder, less imaginative and more precise truth concerning the very manhood and the very godhead of the Master, Who is now entitled Mediator.

He is also called the Captain of Salvation ; and a vivid view of the Advent hope succeeds to the picturesque tradition of the coming at a Last Day in clouds. In the trouble of the time He comes, ‘while it is called to-day’ : thought need not be taken ‘now’ of that far-off mysterious ‘morrow,’ for now the Son of God goes forth to war :

who follows in His train ? And withal the passion for innocence in a world of violence evokes a cleansing sacramental priestly idea of salvation. Brotherly communion throughout Christendom begins to stir affection in a manner that the ordered Western Church could not alone complete. From Palestine to Europe, and now from Europe to Asia, the Gospel centre passes, and the Spirit works more and more subtly, informally, from within.

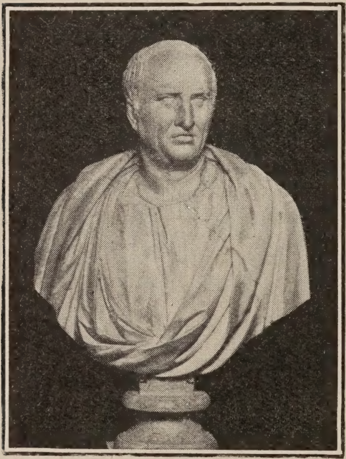
Then the wide ocean. All this finds completion in John, the Gospel issuing upon its world-wide, pervasive destiny. The supreme document of this concluding period, the Gospel according to S. John, is a re-told narrative, love-like yet most life-like ; reminiscent, interpreting ; less repeating history than discovering its meaning ; recurring from Paul and Church and Creed and Rite to ‘ the simple Gospel preached and believed in Galilee,’ but showing in the homely Master of that Galilean Gospel the Word made flesh.

This final Gospel looks back upon the past, the idyllic and the dreadful past. It looks back calmly, and looks forward rather. It looks forward vigorous, with confidence and new youth. It is the Gospel of the incarnate Word and of the brief memorable utterances of His eternal mind :—I am the Resurrection and the Life : I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life : I am the Good Shepherd . . . there shall be one fold, one shepherd : greater works than Mine shall ye do, because I go to the Father : and yet Mine still, for because I live ye shall live also . . . I in you, ye in Me, all one in the Father. This is the Gospel of the evil world and of the sinless fellowship ; and this is to change and save that. ‘ By their love to one another shall My disciples be known,’ said the Master : ‘ My Lord and my God,’ said the disciple.

# I

## *THE EXPECTANT WORLD*

IN the fullness of time, S. Paul wrote, our Lord was born and the Gospel entered the world. It was in part a weary world : the civil war of Rome had wearied the nations of the Mediterranean. But there was vigour in the East, and a fresh, rude life growing, and perhaps threatening, in the North. And there was a widespread yearning for a true religion.

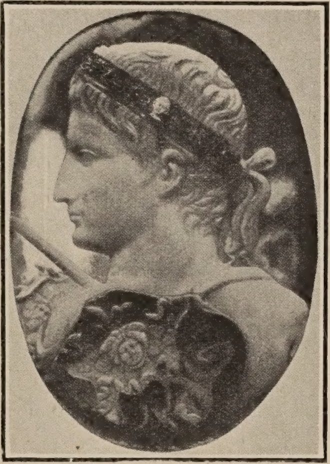


Cicero.

Clear evidence of this is not indeed abundant till much later. When it does come it is various and far-distributed. For the actual period we are nearly confined to the literature of Rome as witness. Yet that is less a limitation than might appear at first. For just then the Roman Empire embraced nearly the whole known world. At the least it was roughly conterminous with civilization.

Look back a century. Consider the days of Cicero. The Republic was losing its ancient virtue. Greed, party-spirit, corrupt government were almost forcing, as inevitable, a revolutionary reform. The wolf in patrician

Roman blood was reverting to his cruel nature, and the beggarly character in the plebeian was petted, thwarted, and dangerous. Such nobility as the house of Scipio had cherished was dissolving. A few names stand out respectably. Among these Cicero is conspicuous, and in a peculiar fashion. His ability as a statesman may still be disputed : the perennial dispute witnesses to something deeper in him than his own generation could easily appreciate. But those who are at home in the history of the period must appreciate with more or less acquiescence Merivale's paradox: we judge him harshly because we think of him as a Christian.

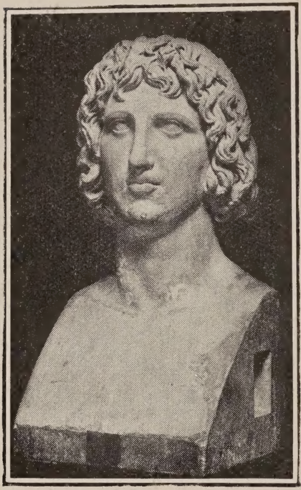


Augustus.

But had Cicero any religion? In his defence of Archias the poet he made this confession of faith :

> Assuredly, if the spirit of man reached not beyond the horizon of this little life, he would not toil and watch, take noble thought, and put life itself (as he does) upon the hazard. Nay, in every good man conscience is awake, impelling and testifying that name and fame are not for private brief enjoyment, but a vital debt to all generations, and memory is a mode of eternal life. It may be that after death our separate consciousness is finished. It may be, as philosophers have supposed, that some essence of selfhood survives. I know not; but I muse and hope and am content.

And this we may interpret generously as Cicero's deeper thought. Pleading for Archias the poet he lets himself go, as more than once or twice he does on other occasions, and then gleams of a strange light are the finest charm of his character. These rare confidences explain the affection, the goodness of his letters to Atticus, which are romantic even in business and politics. And yet the general tenor is goodness with no interest in religion, a detachment different in kind from the ordinary reticence of Englishmen to-day.



VIRGIL.

Herein Cicero represents the polite society of his day ; to whom religion was of no account. There were state prayers and a ritual of government, patriotic in a measure but nothing more.

And yet again, just at that very time was composed the most passionately religious poem in ancient literature, Lucretius' *De rerum natura* or 'Concept of Nature.' This poem has the truly religious passion which ingenuous minds must sometimes recognize in devotees of science to-day. But its plain intention is negative, to clear away the superstition of the time, the fables of the gods and their cruelties. Such denials are from time to time a necessary prelude to a revival of pure faith.

And Lucretius' denial, together with Cicero's good example, are types of more or less pervading influences which led the way to the attempt of Augustus to inaugurate a revival of sincere religion. Here it will suffice to refer for evidence of the emperor's design to the two poets he enlisted in the service, Horace and Virgil.

Rome: the Forum.

In the *Carmen Saeculare* and those eminently noble odes in which Horace celebrates the divine patrons of the Roman state he evokes a fresh enthusiasm for the Olympian cult. The Romans had borrowed that cult from the Greeks and adapted it to their own ends. It had never been very real to them ; more a set of names and symbols for duty to the state than anything else ; and as the old Republican virtue waned the Olympians lost their deity. Now Horace links them with Romulus and the heroes of Roman history, and with such force of terse, grave language as even still moves us ; though we grow cold again when he passes to Augustus himself as almost sharing their divinity, and wonder whether his original audience felt a like chill.

But neither Olympians nor heroes filled the religious heart of Italy. There had been a ‘ silvan Etruria and an Italy yet innocent of Rome,’ and it was there still. Mysterious forests, unseen guardians of farms and herds, oak trees and sacred wells, the wide sky ; gods of the countryman, only half defined, with no builded temples, with sometimes hardly an individual name—that was the religion of the countryside and highlands, vague and gross, in part malignant, but natural, reverent, and real. And that was the religion which Virgil understood. His *Aeneid* did not satisfy him ; when he was dying he wished it destroyed. Some few persons dislike it now. But loyal Virgilians have always distinguished very well between the imperial additions and the integral lustre. The *Georgics* point the way. Evander and ‘ the gathering of the clans ’ continue it. The undertones hallow the story. All through, ‘ hands are outstretched with yearning for a far shore.’ Our Tennyson (as no other) knew the depth and sympathized with the infirmity of his mas-

STONEHENGE.

ter : ‘ Light among the vanish’d ages . . . Golden branch amid the shadows . . . Majestic in thy sadness at the doubtful doom of human kind.’ And Virgil was the poet of Augustus, and in the reign of Augustus, Jesus Christ the Saviour was born at Bethlehem.

To North and West, Gauls and Teutons were coming into touch with Rome. Their barbarian virtues impressed Tacitus in the next generation. We discern dimly their antique faith and rites ; a rude sincerity mingled with gloom and cruelty. As always, fear was bred of superstition and cruelty of fear. There were propitiatory sacrifices with human victims, and the warlike tribes and piratical mariners worshipped fiercely.

In the East some ancient nations were still great, so great that their pomp exercised a charm upon some Roman ambitions. Most Romans thought it a sinister charm, and a vague fear of oriental influence affected the course of imperial politics. And in religion there certainly was an influence. In the Scipionic period the worship of the Great Mother of the gods, long resisted, was publicly adopted by the state. As nation after nation entered the comity of the empire its gods were patronized, and the soldiers and the multitude of Rome seem to have found, not in famous ancient religions like that of the Persian Zoroastrians, but in obscurer beliefs and ceremonies of the half barbarian people in Asia Minor, satisfaction for that craving for salvation which disturbed the untutored soul of the wide world in this era.

Out of the East salvation, was an oracle then in vogue. It brings to mind the hymn of Zacharias : ‘ Whereby the dayspring—*Anatolê*, the Orient—shall visit us.’ And the classical scholar muses of a certain poem of Virgil's, the Pollio eclogue which, though it be again and again explained historically of the birth of an heir to a noble Roman family, still tempts meditative readers to recognize a remoter inspiration :

> Chanter of the Pollio, glorying in the blissful years again to be,
> Summers of the snakeless meadow, unlaborious earth and oarless sea.

Mr. Royds has translated the poem in the Hebraic style of Isaiah, and his version (which is faithful) impels the fancy that Virgil must have known and partly believed the prophets of Israel. It is more reasonable and more significant to see in Virgil, as in the multitude of simple souls, a yearning touched with premonition. Even the extravagancies of homage to the new emperor might find analogy in the hopes of certain prophets of Israel at the period of restoration who saw a Messiah in Zerubbabel.

Indeed the Spirit of God was moving on the face of the waters. The sons of man were waiting for the word, Let there be light.

## II

## *GALILEE AND JERUSALEM*

IN this expectant world one nation stands apart, the Jews. S. Paul includes them with the Gentiles ‘ under sin ’ ; and he credits the Gentiles also with a moral goodness, not general indeed, but real. But the Jew had, even generally, a higher morality than the Gentile, even the civilized Gentile world. Secular history shows this : we are not dependent only on the witness of S. Paul. The extensive, subtle influence of the dispersed Jews issued from the recognition of this moral nobility by Romans of high and low birth and Roman subjects in various places and conditions. ‘ To them were entrusted the oracles of God,’ said S. Paul, and that was the doctrine of the Old Testament. History seems to endorse the doctrine. Anyhow, history itself induces us to approach the Gospel through Israel and Palestine, ‘ the holy land.’

The Jews, too, were expectant. ‘ And as the people were in expectation and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ ; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water ; but there cometh One Who is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoe I am not worthy to unloose : He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.’

This was the Messianic hope ; sprung from ancient Hebrew legend, outlined (with sublime purity) by the prophets, pictured in strange particularity by Daniel and the Maccabean apocalyptic seers, thence at just the date of the birth at Bethlehem breaking out in such popular hymns as those Psalms of Solomon which celebrated,

The Sea of Galilee.

almost in the very words of the angel to the shepherds, the imminent appearance of a ' Saviour, an anointed Lord, in the city of David.'

This faith had risen to excitement just then, not wholly or equally throughout the nation, more among the simple than the eminent, more in Galilee than Jerusalem.

The Gospel story is a tragedy—crowned by a victory, which is however within the bounds of the primitive narrative still obscure. As tragedy it centres in Jerusalem. But the middle scene is Galilee, full of charm and genial life. In Galilee the face of nature charms.

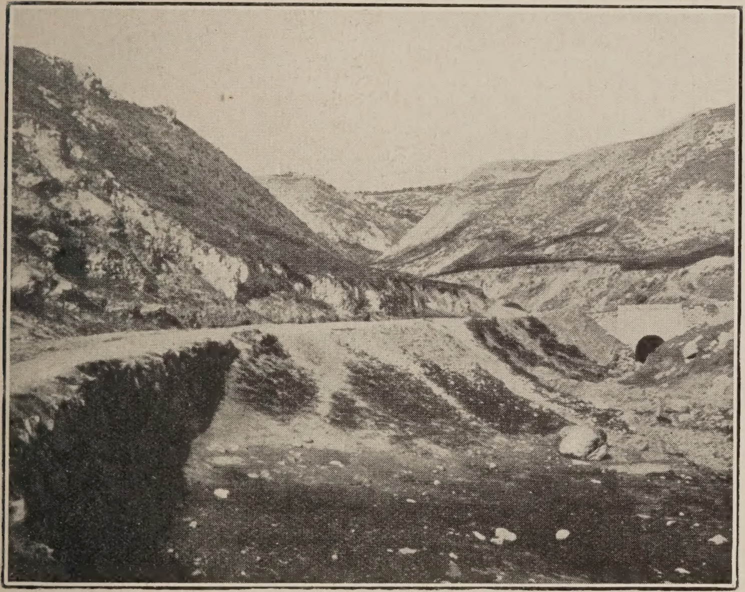
Fishermen on the Sea of Galilee.

The Sea of Galilee, the fields and hills ; the mountains in northern distance, snow-capped, Hermon and Lebanon with its cedars ; the three rivers issuing from that mountain source, Jordan through Palestine, Abana to Damascus, Orontes to Antioch : all this is beautiful and romantic with history. Through Galilee the road ran from the coast (in touch with Rome and Europe) to the far East : merchants and armies passed along it.

Galilee saw something of the busy world, and Roman centurions and Greek travellers and dwellers in the land meet us in the Galilean Gospel. Not mainly these, however. The people round whom the story progresses are simple and nearly all Jews, lost sheep of the house of Israel. The high priest at Jerusalem would endorse that epithet. Galilee of the Gentiles this country liked to be, and still was called. Its country folk sat somewhat loosely to the ceremonies and tradition of their Church. The careful ones went up to the Feast once a year, but they worshipped mostly in synagogues and knew little of the temple. We hear little of priests and sacrifices. The religious martinets who kept the people straight were the Pharisees, who had always been on the side of popular religion, and with whatever formalities and pride, fostered the popular faith in the promise of the kingdom of God, in the Christ Who was to come, and in the resurrection and the day of divine judgement.

It is a lively picture that the first three Gospels give. Hill villages and fishing towns, farmers, tax-collectors, and the countryman's dislike of these latter and of the imperial government they serve at many removes : sometimes a glimpse of more threatening restiveness, which the Lord Jesus watched seriously, yet admitted a ' Zealot ' to His intimate band of disciples : on the other hand, excellent centurions of the Roman army, friends of the quiet and devout. Much quiet religion, but much superstition with its gloom : the Lord casts out devils as often as He heals the sick, and His own absolute refusal to recognize the influence of any ' Satan ' is made a symbol of His faith in Matthew and Luke's amplified account of the Temptation.

Poverty was widespread but its bitterness was tempered by the little sympathies of village life, which the Lord welcomed as a starting-point for a deeper doctrine of charity : the pariahs of this rustic world were generally afflicted by some sinister disease which, being tinged with superstitious abhorrence, the neighbours treated somewhat cruelly, He with special tenderness. The Lord Himself and His chosen disciples belonged to a fairly well-to-do class, master mariners with boatmen under them and such-like. For a while the superior Pharisees, favouring His ministry, were friendly and hospitable : yet even then, it seems, a little supercilious ; and presently, breaking with them on the rigid rule of the Sabbath,



THE ROAD TO JERICHO.

He was put out of the synagogue, taught in the open air, took to the road accepting alms of well-wishers to His company of wandering disciples, and when He journeyed for the last time to Jerusalem had not where to lay His head.

Jerusalem was very different : partly because it was old-fashioned. Judea lay outside the road from East to West. In ancient times the prophets recognized the significance of the site, and there was common sense as well as uncommon trust in God in their exhortations to the Davidic kings to keep clear of the restless politics of the nations. So still : for generations there had been a temple at Jerusalem and the tradition of sacrificial rites and the priestly caste, half priest half prince, content with the Law and cold to the prophetic appendix to the Bible of Israel. From the opening chapters of S. Luke we see how attractive a type of churchman's piety this could produce : those chapters offer a picture of Judaic temple life reflecting, as in a mirror, contemporary events and people in the days when the temple yet stood : it is as when we read in a pre-Reformation document of the medieval Church, and discern the ingenuous religion of the ' quiet in the land.'

But there were other types at Jerusalem. The happy, natural temper of the first half of the Gospel narrative is due in part to its having so little to do with the Sadducees, the high priests of Jerusalem. They appear when we reach the Passion, and their cold bigotry is relieved by few traits of goodness, patriotic devotion, or faith. Their temple had been built by Herod. It had slight hold upon the national affection. For these Herods were foreigners, and however splendid, generous, or even brilliant in

A Hill City of Samaria.

government, they scarcely believed with Israel's faith, and belonged to a lower, fiercer civilization than the Jews at the time of the birth of Christ. The Herods owed their kingdom to the Romans ; Herod the Great, in whose reign our Lord was born, was a protégé of the empire and forced upon the Jews, whom he disgusted by his violence ; after his death some minor royalties were allowed his sons, but Judea was attached to the imperial government of Syria ; a change which little satisfied the Jews.

Throughout their history the Judeans had ill brooked an imperial yoke. That comfortable kind of civilization had never been a privilege they valued. Fiercely and turbulently they intrigued against Assyria, Babylon, or Persia, and were ready to fight for home rule against hopeless odds. Led by the Maccabees they had defeated the armies of the Greco-Syrian empire into which for a while they were absorbed. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews witnesses to the glorious memory so long cherished of this miraculously recovered freedom. And the Maccabean heroism was characteristic. The rebellion was a holy war, purely for the faith at first. Then other ambitions appear. At last for a brief while they had again a king of their own, and it seems as though the old-fashioned notion of ‘ theocracy ’—which we find in Samuel, in Ezekiel, and now again in Josephus—were profoundly true : this strange people were God's ‘ peculiar,’ pilgrims and strangers, God's nomad guests in the fleeting world of time ; God's vassals, God alone their king ; and every time they ‘ went a-whoring after idols ’ their fortunes fell and their valour degenerated. Anyhow, they took no pride in Roman citizenship, nor pleasure in large, secure community. They were ever ready to put liberty before ease, and their dream was to dwell apart in their own fair country undefiled. So Micah prayed :

> Feed Thy people with Thy rod, the flock of Thine heritage, which dwell solitary in the wood in the midst of Carmel : let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.

JERUSALEM.

It was in the peace of Augustus that the Son of Mary was born at Bethlehem, but in a restless corner of a province which sixty years hence was to be set on fire with a desperate rebellion. The shadow of that fate lies along the Gospel story. The baser politics of the Messianic hope mingle with the nobler aspirations and darken the ancestral trust of the children of the Father. The beloved, only Son tries to open their eyes to the happier truth.

A few regard His wisdom, but He seems to fail. At last He died for seal of His witness, and by the end of the century it was understood, at least by some, that the lost sheep He had come to save were of a larger house of Israel than Jerusalem could comprehend, and that the way He went about the enterprise was the only way. *Libertas ecclesiastica* is the oracular Johannine motto of Crivelli's picture of the Annunciation.

Such modern liberty was more readily understood in Galilee of the Gentiles than in orthodox Judea. Between the two districts was yet another, not merely suspected of loose orthodoxy but condemned. This was Samaria.

The Samaritans as a religious sect were not that mixed people whom the Assyrians planted in northern Israel when the northern kingdom fell. No doubt some descendants were still dwelling there from those almost prehistoric settlers. But the Samaritans who worshipped the One God of Israel on Mount Gerizim in the time of our Lord, and still worshipped in the same place and with the same faith when Dean Stanley visited them in 1852, had another origin. The schism sprang from the dispute we read about at the end of the book of Nehemiah. Either in Nehemiah's time or (as Josephus tells the story) somewhat later, a high priest's son seceded from the innovating Jewish Church, as he and the little company who followed him considered the reformed community of Ezra and Nehemiah. They took the Book of the Law with them and never added Prophets or Writings. They held themselves, their faith, and their worship to be constant to ancient tradition, such as progressive Pharisees and conservative Sadducees had alike violated. But neither Pharisees nor Sadducees acquiesced. In the first three Gospels we get glimpses of these heretics : we discern something of a serious estrangement, and of the broad trust and charity of the Lord Jesus toward them. In S. John, as often that evangelist underlines or explicates what is but touched in the earlier record, the Lord has a gracious intercourse with them, out of which comes to expression one of the largest ideas of the Johannine theology :

> The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what : we know what we worship : for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth : for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

## III

## *THE NATIVITY*

ON Christmas Eve, 1837, a brother and sister were looking from a house in Camberwell into the clear night, silence and peace in their hearts and around. The midnight hour struck and from churches near and far the Christmas bells pealed. They listened, and when all was over the sister said as they parted : ' Alfred, you should make a poem of this.' Next morning the brother brought these verses :

It was the calm and silent night !
Seven hundred years and fifty-three
Had Rome been growing up to might,
And now was queen of land and sea,
No sound was heard of clashing wars ;
Peace brooded o'er the hush'd domain ;
Apollo, Pallas, Jove, and Mars
Held undisturb'd their ancient reign,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago.

It was the calm and silent night !
The senator of haughty Rome
Impatient urged his chariot's flight,
From lordly revel rolling home.
Triumphal arches gleaming swell
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway ;
What reck'd the Roman what befell
A paltry province far away,
In the solemn midnight
Centuries ago ?

Within that province far away
  Went plodding home a weary boor :
A streak of light before him lay
  Fall'n through a half-shut stable door
Across his path. He pass'd—for nought
  Told what was going on within ;
How keen the stars ! his only thought ;
  The air how calm and cold and thin,
    In the solemn midnight
      Centuries ago.

O strange indifference !—low and high
  Drowsed over common joys and cares :
The earth was still—but knew not why ;
  The world was listening—unawares ;
How calm a moment may precede
  One that shall thrill the world for ever.
To that still moment none would heed ;
  Man's doom was link'd no more to sever,
    In the solemn midnight
      Centuries ago.

It is the calm and silent night !—
  A thousand bells ring out, and throw
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite
  The darkness, charm'd and holy now.
The night that erst no name had worn
  To it a happy name is given ;
For in that stable lay newborn
  The peaceful Prince of earth and heaven,
    In the solemn midnight
      Centuries ago.

The poem has an idea and no little beauty. Mr. Bridges the Laureate has also made a noble poem on the Christmas bells. With the Christmas bells Tennyson marked the three stages of grief and peace in his *In Memoriam*. Handel's ' Pastoral Symphony ' is played in every well-ordered church on Christmas Day. Yet none of these, nor even Milton's ode, is quite so purely poetry as the chapter in S. Luke—pure poetry creating truth of truth.

To S. Luke Jerusalem is the starting-point and goal. From Jerusalem his history of the Christian Church issues and in Jerusalem he leaves the disciples at the close of his Gospel, which also begins in Jerusalem. He sets us in the hill country of Judea among those 'quiet in the land' from whom the Lord inherits His catholic churchmanship. Vividly Luke describes the priestly life and temple service as it went on in the last half-century before the temple was destroyed. He does this with what seems unconscious naturalness. He does not present a historian's reconstruction, as from documents, of a state of things long past. It reads just as his promise in his preface claims: he is telling us what eye-witnesses and actors in the scene itself have told him. The scholar appears in the way he manages the report. He writes in his pure, easy style, yet keeps close to his informants' own simplicity: people who saw angels and received direct intimations from heaven, and were so familiar with Jewish 'medieval' piety that they take such familiarity for granted, and he helps us to follow their delightful story-telling by adding brief comment. Notice how the outlook in the three hymns, even in Simeon's 'light to lighten the Gentiles,' goes not beyond the limits of the ancient national prophetic hope. This is poetry creating truth of truth. Very likely neither we of to-day, nor Luke with his education, would have shaped the narrative of what happened just as these simple folk did; but the more carefully we read the more convinced we become that we are hearing what did happen.

Shepherds keeping watch over their sheep by night—

BETHLEHEM.

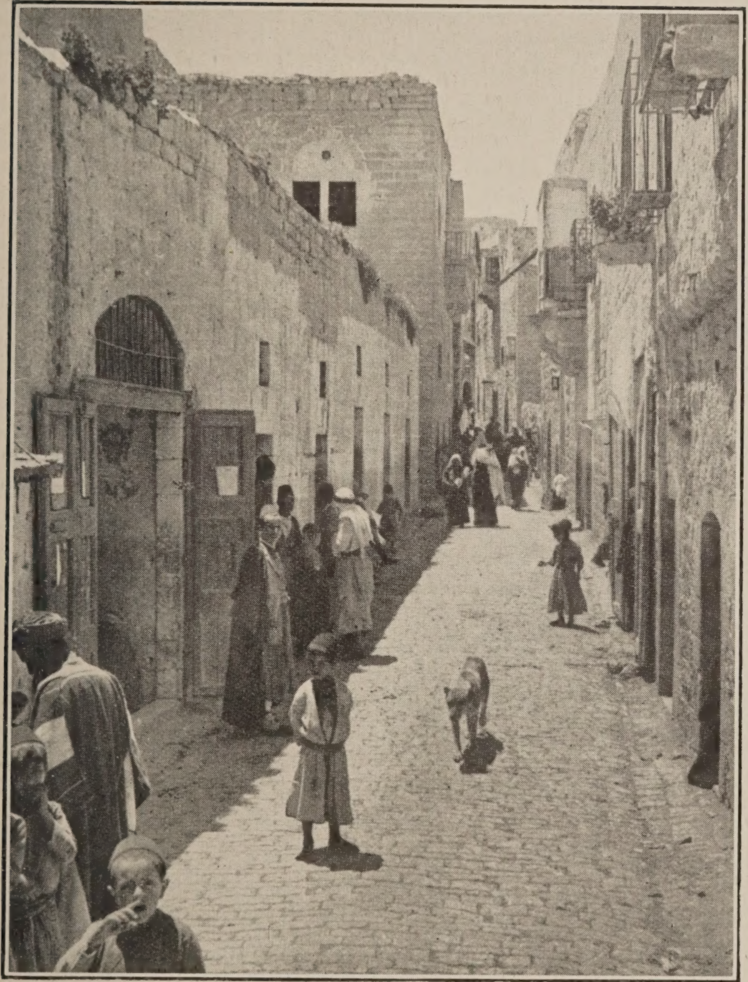
we perceive how this chapter attracted S. John and how his 'Lamb of God' and 'Good Shepherd' were inspired by it and the subsequent parable in S. Luke. But to these shepherds the angel tells, in the very words of the contemporary Psalms of Solomon, of an heir of the genuine

Davidic line, born in Bethlehem, obscure, unrecognized, a royal prince in exile but destined for His throne.

But again, Luke puts in this touch poetically. That is a fact. It is a romantic fact. Yet how much more. The three hymns follow interpreting ; and interpreting in serial profundity. First the Virgin Mary with the generous intensity of the patriot hope yet clean from everything which spoiled that patriotism—a new world for the humble, hungry meek. And here, as in so much on which the Fourth Gospel throws its problematic light, we muse on the doctrine presently to be promulgated—the Beatitudes for instance—and wonder how much of the profoundest dogmas of the Christian faith might be traced back to the Mother's teaching of the Child, and her teaching to the sober Jewish tradition of the ' quiet in the land.'

Then Zacharias and the *Benedictus*. Here is the priest experienced in the secret sorrow of the human heart and the universal yearning for recovered innocence. For him the hidden One reveals Himself as 'the dayspring from on high,' and His royalty is the remission of sin. Simeon, with the wise joy of life's long day past, has but one simplicity for the theme of his short descant : ' O my God Thou art true, O my soul thou art happy.'

Were these really the hymns of these three heralds of the Gospel, their very words ? Certainly not their very words, for the words have come to us in Greek and we may be pretty sure that the original utterance would be in the Aramaic of daily life, or possibly in the Hebrew of the temple ritual. And one instance may show that translation would effect a considerable remove from such reality. The Greek ' dayspring ' is the translation in the Greek Bible used by Jews of the Dispersion, of the

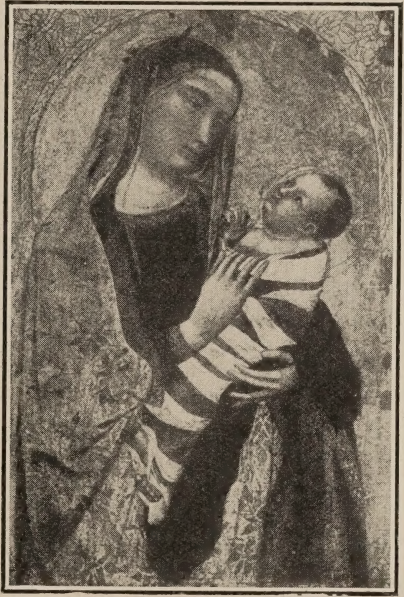


A Street in Bethlehem.

notably prophetic Hebrew title The Branch or Shoot. Again, it must be remembered that some manuscripts assign the *Magnificat* to Elisabeth ; and though that is not likely to be the primitive reading, still the variation does indicate a variation in the tradition of the poems themselves. Reasons (which are by no means unreasonable) have been put forward for supposing that these hymns are hymns according to our popular use of the word, that they were composed for the worship of the early Jerusalem Church. If it were so, it would seem that (as so often in ritual) the formula gathers up the scattered teaching or the traits of character in the persons thus celebrated—so for instance the baptismal formula at the end of S. Matthew. And so, too, it would be if S. Luke composed them and set them in the story, following the recognized fashion of historians from Thucydides to Sir Walter Scott, who put a speech or a soliloquy into the mouth of such or such a personage at such or such a critical point instead of adopting the modern method of analysing exhaustively the thoughts or emotions of their characters.

But perhaps we are spending time and space uselessly in this discussion. Anyhow, we get these thoughts and emotions truly if typically. And no secure answer can ever be given to the question which is intriguing us. For nothing in any one of these hymns is improbable as coming from a devout Judean Churchman knowing the prophetic books by constant reading and recitation. When we remember who these particular persons were and what was happening to them, the thing seems highly probable in each case. The ultimate doubt comes from an instinctive feeling of our too sophisticated minds that all these persons would not express in this way so symmetrically significant a series of prophecy or prelude to the Gospel.

The oftener we muse upon the problem the more readily we return to our fancy (which is, however, no mere fancy but just what S. Luke says in his preface he did) of the evangelist listening to the naively pious tales of ancient native Christians and writing them out almost in their very words, himself appreciating their rustic poetry and affectionately conserving the bloom of it.

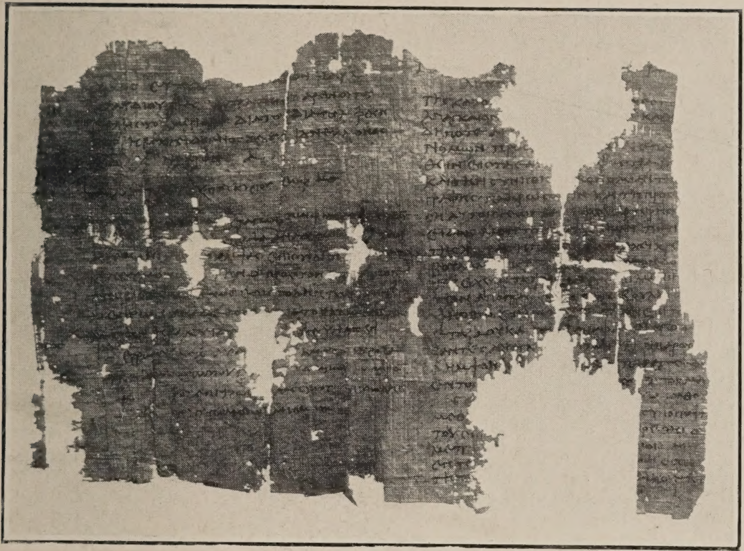


The Virgin and Child.

This poetic charm belongs especially to S. Luke, and in a special manner to these opening chapters, the 'Gospel of the Boyhood.' As the story goes on it deepens from gaiety to tenderness and pity, and in his championship of the poor and oppressed to indignation. But poetry is the character of all three Galilean Gospels. S. Mark has the fresh vigour of the genuine ballads. S. Matthew is more set and stately but far from prosaic. Think of 'Thou art Peter ; and on this rock . . .' or 'Come unto Me all ye that labour . . .' or 'Baptizing into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit . . . and lo ! I am with you every day unto the consummation of the age.' Compare too his handling of the mystery of our Saviour's Birth with S. Luke's. S. Luke leaves this a beautiful and solemn mystery. Taken by themselves without S. Matthew's variation or the Church tradition, the mere words of Gabriel's annunciation need not go beyond a promise of an unexpected and uniquely blessed marriage. But the words are not mere words. The pervasive Lucan poetry transports the reader into reverie. In S. Matthew there seems at first no doubt about the meaning. He narrates a miracle in terms as plain as S. Mark narrates plain historical events. And yet we muse. The context carries us farther. We are in the region of Hebrew prophecy and its expected fulfilment, yet so unexpected in its kind. This is not plain matter of history. The eternal breaks through. We know not all it means. Addition, comment, dispute, would be irreverent. We can but adore and—what S. Matthew always leads to—obey.

The wise men from the East : this has caught the imagination of children and painters throughout all generations. The painters delight but also hinder us. The medieval painters depicted kings and dwelt upon the significance of the gifts. The renaissance painters revelled in the magnificence and barbaric splendour of the kings, their pages and cavalcades, the mountain paths through which they wound. The first made allegory, the second romance. To-day a modern type appears ; as in the east window of St. Andrews parish church in Fife, where the shepherds represent Labour, the wise men Government and Science ; and we are farther from the historical origin than ever.

But was there a historical origin ? Is the story true, as facts are true ? With all its transference of story into

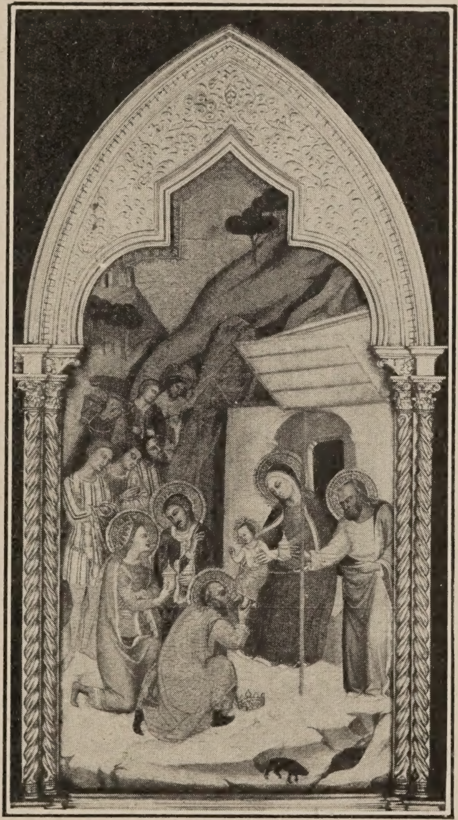


Papyrus order for a Census.

picture, this display to the outward eye of what was composed to enter the mind by another faculty has made legend out of history. History ? Well, not the history of daily doings like we have for the most part of S. Mark : yet history. That other imagination, the children's, may help us better.

If we look back in memory we all see hours in the past which have been formative. Something happened which evoked a new idea, faculty, faith, affection, humbling or encouraging. Some of these hours we can describe ; those namely which came lately during our grown-up life. But others lying far back in early childhood we cannot describe. There is a vague impression of a summer day, a garden of flowers, some one coming, something said and done, and a secret touch to me and me alone and deep within. We know it was marvellously strange, now we are pretty sure that the other people present saw nothing out of the common. But we cannot now repeat in any words ; we vainly seek what we then saw, felt, imagined, nay received. Then we might have described it so far as clear apprehension was necessary : that we had. But then we had no words. Nor did we seek them ; for we had no wish to speak. Children are good listeners, partly because they are inarticulate, partly too because they are happy in what they merely see and hear. Sights and sounds which afterwards will be commonplace in recurrence are then suffused with wonder.

The wise men from the East, led by a star, is what a child, become articulate, might tell a tale of. We, grown-up in the twentieth century, might see the embassage which, stripped of all the fancy of the painters, is no embassage but just a curiously coincidental journey of some pious Eastern saints, and see it as nothing very much out of the common. To the childlike elders with whom S. Luke conversed it had been very different from that. This kind of story belongs especially to the beginning and end of our Gospels but the whole text of them is consonant. The pains of scholarship spent upon them for the last sixty or seventy years were at first an effort to bring them into real life out of a region of schematic theology ; to recover our Lord and His disciples as real persons ; to show the story true. Very good was that aim. Then exactitude was needed to substantiate the first free re-fashioning. Literary, then historical, more and more minute examination and comparison ensued. Now at last we find ourselves set upon one task only, to vindicate, to co-ordinate 'The Gospels as historical documents' (which is the title of the best book that has been composed on these lines).

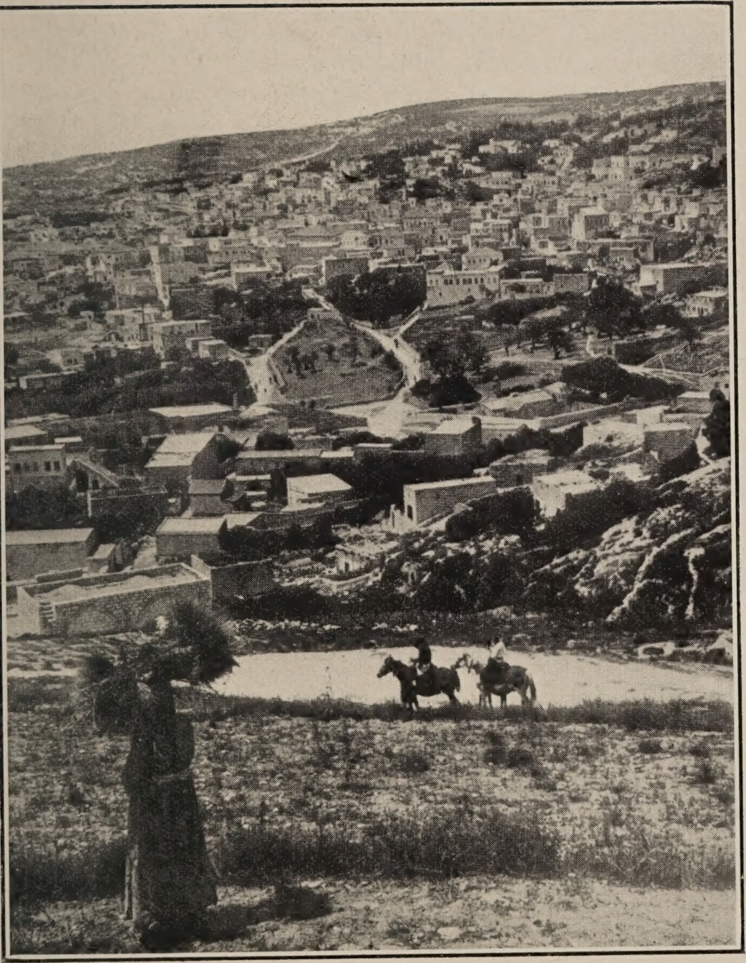


The Visit of the Magi.

But it is time that we should remember the other aspect. The Gospels are historical documents in a peculiar sense. The scene is evidently Galilee and Jerusalem. S. Mark gives no indication of time except by naming Pontius Pilate: he does not even tell the name of the high priest. S. Matthew is nearly as incurious in this respect. S. Luke, who was a scholar and historian, does introduce his narrative with a summary of the sovereigns of the time and the date (which, however, is far from clear) of a census connected with our Lord's birth at Bethlehem. He indicates our Lord's age in round numbers at the beginning of the ministry. But he, like Mark and Matthew, leaves all that when he gets into the story. None of the three care then about dates and relationships with the outer world. Nor do they care much about the sequence of events even within the ministry. S. Mark—it seems unconsciously—does tell the tale with what attentive readers recognize as a consistent and temporal progress. Matthew and Luke rearrange it to suit their idea of the Lord's life and work. All move on steadily to Passion, Cross, and Resurrection. There, in that divine event, is their interest—as we should say, a theological rather than a historical interest.

But those long words are not the just words for the matter. Speaking lightly, one might rather say the Gospels have the charm of romance : in their fresh air we think of the Psalmist's flight in the Greek version used by the Jews of the dispersion : ' I will cross over to the land of the wonderful tabernacle.' Speaking seriously, it is the timeless, universal, eternal plan of the Gospels which fits them for every clime and every generation. They are not history, not biography ; the three evangelists have made three portraits of One Who really lived, Whose inner face was really seen and adored ; and Who by living, dying, and rising reconciled, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the whole world to God.

These Gospels are the most beautiful of all books ; and no small part of this beauty is in the miracles. But what are we to think of these ? First, notice that ' miracle ' or ' wonder ' is not the authentic Gospel word. It is a common word in Greek stories of wise men, and there it does imply something like magic. Joined with other words—Signs, wonders, mighty works, the strong hand and outstretched arm of the Lord—it recurs not seldom in Deuteronomy and some other books of the Old Testament ; but the associated words make all the differ-



Nazareth

ence. In S. John the Greek word always means ‘ sign.’ In these three Galilean Gospels it is ‘ mighty work ’ or ‘ power.’ The work is most often a work of healing, and many, if not most of these, allow a natural explanation in the light of medical knowledge to-day. In S. Mark’s, the oldest and most spontaneous Gospel, far the largest number of miracles are of this kind. In Matthew and Luke, where Mark’s narrative is edited with re-touchings and additions, the proportion alters. And even in Mark there are miracles which cannot, as far as we can see, be classed as natural. S. Augustine’s description of a miracle, as within the bounds of nature but beyond the bounds we know of nature, may be right, but it would be rash, and from our point of view unsatisfactory, to accept it as sufficient. The Gospel miracles are moral acts. The reality of them is of a somewhat awful value to those who feel most bitterly the degradation of moral slavery. Reasonably or unreasonably, with a logic of the conscience, those cling to a supra-natural deliverance : ‘ Marvels are solid weapons when we are attacked by real prodigies of nature.’

Then notice that miracles are peculiarly characteristic of the first three Gospels. There are miracles in Acts but not very many. Some things happen which the multitude would fain make out to be miraculous but which the author, or S. Paul, allows not so to be : such as the recovery of Eutychus. And this leads us to ponder—as upon our Lord’s words at the raising of Jairus’ daughter, ‘ The maid is not dead, but sleepeth.’ Some things in the early chapters of Acts are rather mysteries than miracles : such as the shaking of the room where the disciples prayed, or the wind and fire of Pentecost. And this again makes us ponder : we observe how often in the Old and also in the New Testament a miracle is associated with a thunderstorm.

But after the three first Gospels and Acts there is little miracle in the New Testament. S. Paul takes no account of miracles which are miracles of contradicted nature, so to speak, in his epistles. The one great miracle of the Lord's resurrection is enough for him, and he considers that as being the earnest of a resurrection, not different in kind, for all men, at least for all the faithful. The Apocalypse pictures the awful events of ultimate judgement, but these are pictures, and picture what is far more significant as mystery than as miracle. In S. John the 'signs' are signs. Their relation to the older Gospel history is a complicated problem which we shall be better able to examine when we have worked through the whole process of the apostolic life and doctrine set forth in the whole New Testament. For the Gospel according to S. John comes last in time, crowning the rest.

So we return to the Galilean Gospels and their miraculous adornment. Adornment is not exactly the word. As the music of its own verse is to any poem so is this character to these Gospels. There is a literary appropriateness in it. The story as these evangelists tell it would not be natural without miracle. They are the 'Primitives,' and critical toil would have been as unbecoming for them as rationalizing their naivety would be in us their readers.

But a literary habit is not sufficient justification in so serious a matter. It may be allowed to free us from obligation to read everything as mere matter of fact. Still we desire to know whether there is or no any matter of fact in these miraculous tales: are they actually tales of 'unfact'?

Therefore we must remember that the whole story is of a Person and a time by themselves. ‘For us men and for our salvation’ is a phrase in picture, in analogy, metaphor: it is difficult to get the right word just because we are trying to define in matter-of-fact language what is not an average fact, but the razor edge of central history, an event which divides and dominates all times and places but has itself no dimensions of ordinary measurement. What is obviously to be recognized in the narrative of the brief period (unmeasurable in the calendar) of the ‘space of forty days’ between the Resurrection and Ascension, is in mixed degree to be recognized throughout the ministry. The eternal breaks through the use and wont of every day. In the Creed we attempt to express this by a metaphorical phrase: in the Gospels it is expressed by the evangelic miracle adornment. In each case expression is inadequate, in each case beautiful, and to men of goodwill, intelligible.

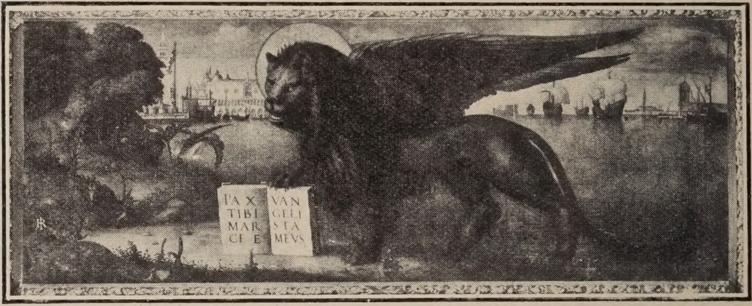
For, lastly, these miracles, these ‘powers,’ are evangelic. Compare the magic wonders of any other biography, history, epic, fable. The best of those are in another kind. In the Gospel all is holy, august, serious, all is of a goodwill truly divine yet correspondent to, even dependent upon, man’s humility and trust. And the Lord Jesus Himself refers it all to the Father in heaven, never to His own deity. A miracle: the Father’s love and the Child’s trust perfectly in accord.

## IV

## *THE KINGDOM OF GOD: ACCORDING TO S. MARK*

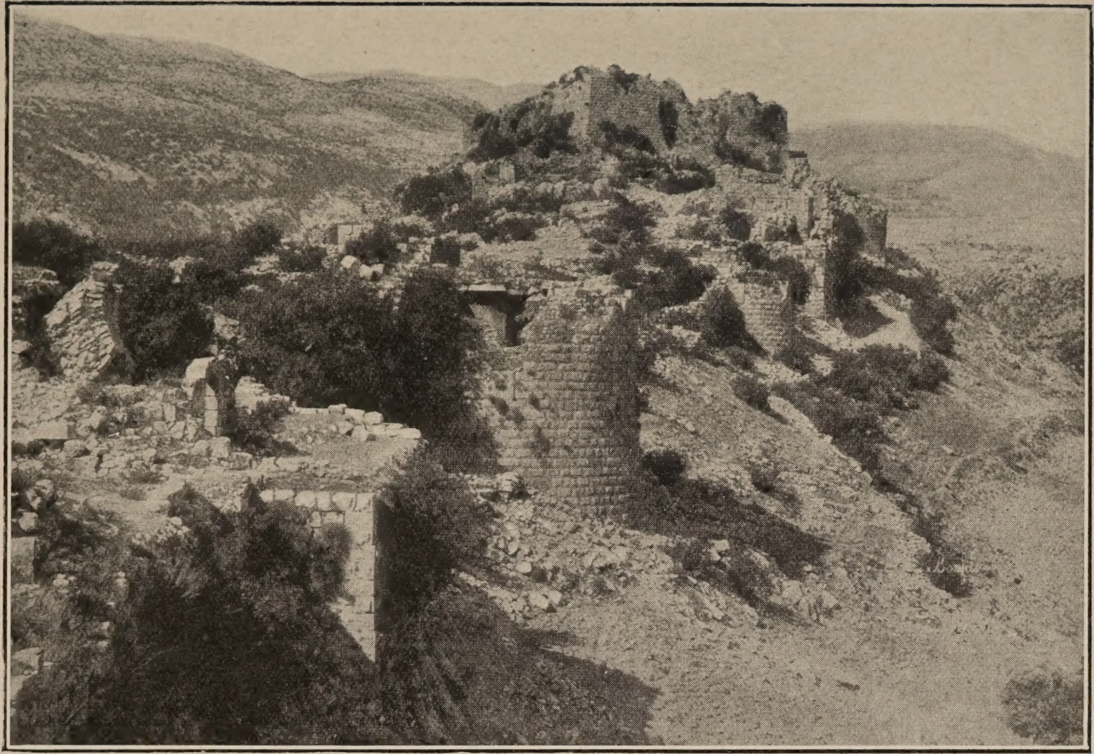
AFTER childhood, ministry. That began when John the Baptist had been put in prison. But the evangelists have as prelude John's own ministry in the wilderness, culminating in the baptism of our Lord. Then the consecrating sign and voice from heaven; the dove; 'Thou art My beloved Son.' Then the wilderness retirement of the Lord Himself. And then a pause. But when the Forerunner had been delivered into the hands of Herod, the greater One came forth with His proclamation—the time is fulfilled: the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and trust the good tidings.

What was the inward relation between the Forerunner and that Greater One? S. Luke tells of blood relationship, and of a like initiation to their ancestral religion among the quiet in the land, the priestly families of old Judean piety. John (in spite of Matthew's version) had not dared to proclaim the kingdom as imminent. The Other was conscious of authority novel, divine. In S. John's Gospel, at the end of the century, the Baptist—a very noble, self-denying hero—emphatically repeats that his role was but secondary. But our Lord, too, in all the Gospels, renounces personal claims—He declares the Father; leads, as Son of Man, the sons of men to their Father and His own; for Himself claims nothing, yet, as the wondrous tale goes on, His disciples (like His herald) are constrained to yield Him all that man can conceive of divine glory. And sometimes perhaps the recollection of His acts and deeds, which have come to us through them, have been coloured by this later won conviction : the conviction being truth, but the way it came upon them being rather different from what completed faith recollected of it, when presented again—from above.



The Lion of S. Mark.

Read the parable of the wicked husbandmen in S. Mark and in S. Luke. Notice the context in Mark, the conversation about John Baptist, compare other passages in which the Lord speaks with like enthusiasm about John, with like indignation against the rulers of the nation who had rejected and betrayed him to the Idumean despot ; noticing all this, is it not plain that by ‘ the beloved son ’ whom the husbandmen killed, the Lord meant John Baptist, to whom He looked back as a pupil might look to his master ? Yet in S. Luke’s account none of this is plain : on the contrary Luke interprets as we commonly do. The Lord, divinely wise of events, prophesies of His own death.



Caesarea Philippi.

That kind of difference between Mark and Luke or Mark and Matthew is frequent. As we consider it we find ourselves introduced to gospel—or synoptic—criticism.

Synoptic : that means ‘ of the first three Gospels.’ The first three, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, present a ‘ common view ’ of the life of Jesus Christ. Turn from the three to the fourth Gospel and you see the difference at once. In the Synoptists the ministry begins with the imprisonment of the Baptist ; from the baptism to the opening ministry there is a blank. In S. John that space is filled. The Synoptists tell of a year’s ministry—in Galilee till the Passover of the Crucifixion. The synoptic might be designated in homely wise the Galilean Gospel. But the Fourth Gospel records three Passovers, a three years’ ministry distributed between Galilee and Jerusalem. Add differences in the order of events (as of movements between the feeding of the five thousand and the Palm Sunday entry into Jerusalem) ; and the mysterious grandeur of Jesus the incarnate Word in the Fourth Gospel instead of (or completing) the kindly manhood of the former three. Consult also the early traditions of church writers and see how these put the Fourth Gospel as a late successor to the others : the last product of apostolic expression. All this easily accounts for the separation of the Fourth Gospel from the other three, being the first act of that critical scrutiny of the life of Jesus Christ which made the nineteenth century a new era in theological thought, study, faith.

The next point that emerged was the relation in which Mark stands to Matthew and Luke. For a while explained as a later epitome, on closer consideration Mark was found to be the earliest, and a material framework for the

An Eastern Village.

other two. For each of those repeats Mark's story, and within their own order and arrangement Mark's very words. A presumption ensues that Mark's history will be nearest to the actual course of events—plain, unpolished truth of fact. And when we read Mark straight through, putting aside all else we have elsewhere learned, the presumption seems justified. What does Mark tell?

He starts abruptly with the Baptist in the wilderness of Judea, the baptism of repentance and the baptism received by our Lord. Then the dove and the voice and (very briefly) the temptation. Then a pause; the Baptist imprisoned; the entry of the Lord Jesus upon Galilee; His proclamation of the kingdom at hand, the call to trust and repentance. All the people crowd about Him. He performs works of power. Awe falls on all who meet Him. ‘ They were afraid ’ is a frequent phrase in this Gospel. Presently suspicion arises among the rulers of the people. It comes to a head in the synagogue when, looking about Him ‘ with anger,’ the Lord heals a man on the Sabbath Day. The Pharisees and Herodians plan to destroy Him. He enters no more into synagogues.

Excommunicate (it seems) He teaches on mountains and by the sea-shore ; but in parables, which are no gentle, interesting illustrations of morality, but half hide, half reveal strange, awful invitations to expect, and that heroically, the imminent kingdom of God. There are journeys up and down the country. The awe so generally felt increases : it is mingled with ominous threats and doubts.

At the feeding of the five thousand some great excitement was roused. Long afterwards John the Evangelist explained this as Messianic : the multitude would make Him king. In Mark there is a pause : a quiet space, and then (the sequel confirms John’s interpretation) under the walls of the pagan Caesarea Philippi, S. Peter made the brief tremendous confession, ‘ Thou art the Christ ’ ; adding (according to S. Mark) no more.

At least no more till his Master answered the title Lord by another title liked better by Himself, and in this Marcan Gospel always pregnant with no simple personal significance, and told the disciples that now the Son of Man will go to Jerusalem to die and on the third day rise. Then He called the multitude to draw near—that awe which tinges all this stormy Gospel has kept them at a distance—and utters to them too the invitation to

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE AND THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

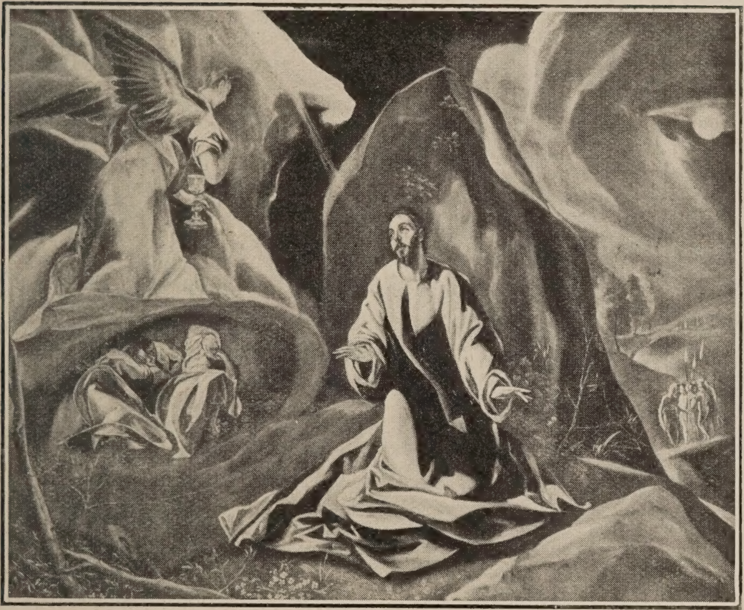
martyrdom, the explanation of the half-veiled parables : ‘ If any of you will come after Me, let him deny self and take up his cross and follow Me. For whosoever wills to save his own soul shall lose it, but whoso wills to lose his soul for My sake, My Gospel, shall save it.’ The kingdom indeed is now at hand. But the Master must die for that good tidings to come true. And He will die as Son of Man, not alone : so shall He rise again and not alone—mankind’s great age begins anew.

Then the Lord, the Twelve, and those of the multitude who dare, journey to Jerusalem. And as they ascend, Jesus is in front, and the Twelve behind Him wonder, and the rest follow and fear. Three times He repeats His warning of the Passion. At Jericho a blind beggar hails Him as Son of David. And when He rides into Jerusalem people strew garments in His path and cry ‘ Hosanna. Blessed is He Who cometh in the Name of the Lord. Blessed is the approaching kingdom of our father David.’

The days succeed one another with significant actions. Temple cleansed. Tribute to Caesar allowed—this coming kingdom has naught to do with the politics of the day, and the Master rejects the support of the Zealots who might have rescued Him from high priest and Romans. The advent of the great and terrible day of the Lord is prophesied, but as for the when and how ‘ none knoweth, only the Father in heaven’ ; therefore watch.

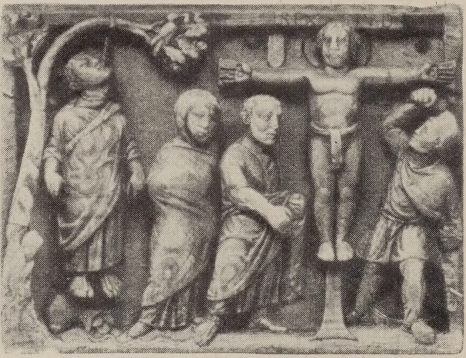
And Judas for money betrays his Master to the high priest. What does he betray ? What secret had he to sell ? ‘ Thou art the Christ,’ Peter had confessed, and He had straitly charged the Twelve to tell no man.

The last supper—the passover—the Body and the Blood—the libation poured on behalf of many. But,



The Agony in the Garden.

'Verily I say unto you that I will not drink again the fruit of the vine till the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.' The garden and 'Let this cup . . . nevertheless not My will but Thine be done.' The arrest Judas did live to effect. Then the trial and the failure of witness ; for the great betrayal, the public spoken witness he was expected to give, Judas never consummated. Pilate — condemnation, scourging, crucifixion. The drugged draught was refused. The crucified King would be conscious to the last. What did He expect ? 'My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? And He gave up His spirit.' 'And the centurion said, Truly, this man was the Son of God' ; as though the kingdom of which the King saw not the expected coming, was seen by the heathen soldier—the Son of Man gave His life a ransom for many.

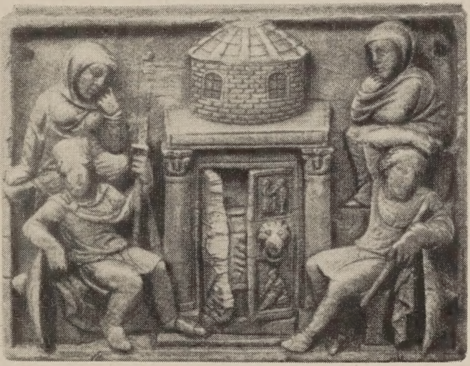


An early representation of the Crucifixion.

The body was hastily buried. Two mornings later women came to the tomb to embalm it. They found not the body, but a young man in a white robe answered them, saying, 'Be not amazed. Jesus ye seek, the Nazarene, the crucified. He hath risen. He is not here. Behold the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples that He goeth before you into Galilee. There shall ye see Him, as He told you. And they went forth and fled from the tomb. For trembling and amazement seized them. And they said nothing to any one : for they feared. . . .'

This brief, abrupt sketch indicates the story as told by Mark. It indicates also an idea which governs the course of the story thus told. All goes on to the mark of the kingdom of God, expected by the people, especially in Galilee ; proclaimed as imminent by Jesus Who is, in the heading to this Gospel, entitled Christ, i.e. the anointed King of this kingdom ; to this kingdom He invites ; for it and to fit disciples for it He works ; for it at last He dies. Mark's is a real Gospel. The kingdom is ' of God,' from above : the core and texture of all the eventful action is awful, wonderful, divine ; no other history like this ; a ransom for many ; salvation wrought by sacrifice ; a ' miracle ' or mighty work.

Yet set within strange limitations. The view scarce stretches beyond the Jewish people. The Lord Jesus indeed refuses to deny tribute to Caesar or to allow any vulgarizing of the divinely moral kingdom of God by assimilation to politics of men ; but He does appear to accept quite naively as His own the, surely imperfect and transient, ideas of that period and place, ideas of the visible act of God, the bringing of this kingdom with sign and wonder, the coming in the clouds, almost one may say crudely, ' the end of the world ' ; and the supreme tragedy of the Crucifixion is that in so picturing the event our blessed Lord was mistaken : ' Eloi, Eloi ' is the cry of an awful disappointment : the main theme of the much later Gospel according to John is just the correction of this primitive Judaic picturing of the eternal fact, invisible, ineffable, not different perhaps in reality but so very different in expression from what the first disciples and their divine Master with them believed and taught.


THE MARIES AT THE SEPULCHRE.

The theological problem here touched is difficult and important. It was the task of the apostolic age to solve that very problem. The New Testament is the record of that gradual solution. But we need not attempt to find that solution till we have worked through that record. What is at once to be noticed is that the very difficulty fits into the general plan of the early story ; is possibly a naturalness, consistency, spontaneity, which characterizes the Gospel according to Mark, and commends it as trustworthy history. That is what Schweitzer and Burkitt find credible and sufficient. Mark, the early Gospel : Mark, the immediate contemporary impression: Mark, the record of events as the events actually impressed the people who saw the things happen and heard the words uttered. Already, even in Matthew and Luke this primitive veracity is developed into a reflective history : even in Matthew and Luke we have interpretations and considerations of what after all ‘ really ’ happened, and harmonizing of present church institutions with the tradition. Already in Matthew and Luke we look back and see the original act reflected in the mirror of the nascent Church. But in Mark not so. Here we see what Erasmus described in his Paraphrase—*vivam imaginem ipsumque Christum*.

## V

## *THE GOSPEL IN THE CHURCH*

BUT can we be so quickly satisfied ? The question is not whether the impressive but strange story in Mark, whether the portrait with its awful divinity so broken by human, local, temporary limitations, pleases us ; but whether Mark has really all along the character of contemporary witness ; and further, whether such confidence in Mark is consistent with impartial attention to the rest of what is at least our early witness.

Take the latter consideration first. If we trust Mark wholly, what are we to think of Matthew and Luke where there are alterations as well as additions of fact ; and where the portrait of the Lord is different from Burkitt's 'stormy personality which moves across the pages of Mark'? The Provost of King's, Dr. Brooke, has asked : 'After all, do you think that the impression taken by a Galilean fisherman after one year's companionship is likely to be the last word of complete truth ?' Shrewd : but we may not lightly indulge in our private estimates of likelihood. It is possible to extract guidance from facts that lie before us.

Matthew and Luke include Mark. Matthew and Luke have each some matter severally their own. Matthew and Luke have also much in common which is not in Mark. What and whence is this common matter ?

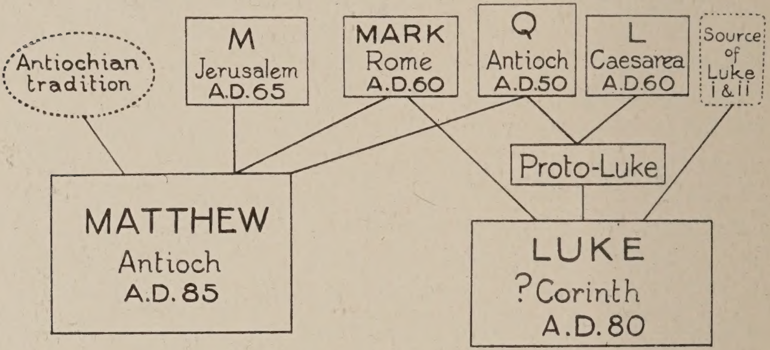
From all the literary facts observed it has been inferred that an early record, perhaps including some story of the life, but chiefly a record of the teaching of the Lord, was available to Matthew and Luke. This ‘ document ’ has received a title in criticism. It is designated Q : i.e. *Quelle*=*source*, or as an ironic English scholar has said, Q=*query*. The irony is almost fair. Some such source it seems clear there must have been. Yet it is a very secret source. Was it as early as Mark, or even earlier? What were its contents, on which the agreement of its restorers is practical but rough : did it or did it not include a narrative of the Passion? Opinions differ on that important point. Was it a written, or at any rate a completely written document at all ; or was it but a collected tradition with fluid margin? Was it made in Palestine, in Galilee, or where? Mr. Crum has written a more than pretty book, *The Original Galilean Gospel*, in which he presents Q as the earliest Galilean Gospel, the Gospel of the very ‘ purity and simplicity ’ of the Christ, the most winning and the most trustworthy picture of the Saviour dwelling, working, journeying, teaching, a friend among the kindly villagers, going about doing good, preaching good tidings—the Gospel that could indeed be believed in its white integrity. It is an attractive picture. It may be an accurate representation : there is no proof to the contrary. Very many are satisfied that it is, and though they indulge less in charming detail they defend the additions common to Matthew and Luke by their argued conviction. There is Mark, a narrative of action resting on eye-witness. There is Q, a narrative of teaching derived from those who heard. Matthew and Luke used these two documents. The guarantee of our threefold Gospel for the life of our Lord is firm.

And yet : what is Q? A secret source. And what is Mark? A narrative consistent with itself. From a syllogism drawn out of these premises merely we can hardly attain the precise conclusion which is desired.

Mr. Streeter has put forth a more elaborate plan of the origins in his book, *The Four Gospels, a Study of Origins*. He thinks Mark and Q are not the only primitive documents. From the local traditions of the great apostolic Church he discovers at least one more. The four chief early churches were Jerusalem, Rome, Antioch, Caesarea. In each of these a Gospel tradition formed. The main line of the story was one throughout, but just as our Mark, Matthew, Luke, while agreeing are distinct, so the four primitive traditions of the great Church were distinct. At Jerusalem, tradition took distinct form by A.D. 65: at Rome by A.D. 60; at Antioch by A.D. 50: at Caesarea by A.D. 60. Tradition implies gradual growth, and the early 'formed' traditions have (being so early) something very trustworthy behind them. But those, Mr. Streeter thinks, were the dates of their 'forming,' of their becoming 'documents' for history; and in the next place we must consider how the documents were used for history.

The Roman tradition exists as the Gospel according to Mark, our Mark. The Antioch tradition is that which we restore as Q. At Caesarea Luke took the tradition and composed a Gospel from it, a first draft of the Gospel we possess 'according to Luke,' which was completed in its final form A.D. 80 at Corinth and by S. Luke. The Jerusalem tradition remains, in its original, obscure; but out of it, combined with Mark and Q, our Gospel 'according to Matthew' came into being, at Antioch A.D. 85. For Matthew and Luke there were other sources, vaguely imagined, which served for special features of the contents.

Streeter's diagram clears the description, which of course is confirmed by evidence, inference, and argument in his book :


Antiochian tradition
M
Jerusalem
A.D.65
MARK
Rome
A.D.60
Q
Antioch
A.D.50
L
Caesarea
A.D.60
Source of Luke i & ii
Proto-Luke
MATTHEW
Antioch
A.D.85
LUKE
?Corinth
A.D.80

Mr. Streeter's book is a great performance : learned, readable, persuasive. And like Dr. Burkitt with S. Mark and Mr. Crum with Q, so with his threefold source and his plan of origins Mr. Streeter is optimistic : he believes he has found good evidence for accepting our existing threefold Gospel as more than a Gospel, as a satisfying historical composition. And yet : here are three scholars, convinced of history, on three independent grounds. Are we to put emphasis on the independence or on the idiosyncrasies ? Are the three more or less impressive than one would be on one unquestioned line ?

But that is rather a captious suspicion. If any single one of them be enough, his rivals do not interfere with the sufficiency. Still, we saw just a shadow of reason for questioning the sufficiency of the former two ; and the very perfection of Mr. Streeter's plan impels the doubt of its being indeed too good a plan, a scheme into which a clever writer manages to fit each bit of evidence as it turns up, and to set it with apparent security and rather too much confidence in what, under these or those conditions, would be likely to happen.

Neither faith nor critical doubt ever stands still. Faith seems spoiled, then criticism discredited in turn. In turn each springs into fresh activity. The arch never sleeps : the contrary strains are vital. In the admirable introduction to the second edition of his *Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels* Mr. Claude Montefiore orientates his readers in the large horizons of quite modern criticism. This has moved away from the position of twenty years ago: and we are obliged to listen to the new voices as they argue that though Mark be early and consistent in its narrative : though Q be a shadow cast by a real and primitive tradition : though (if so it be) a proto-Luke can be discerned of equal virtue to Q ; we still fail of our ambition to see and hear just what men saw and heard when the Lord Jesus moved and spoke in Galilee or Jerusalem.

No document that we possess or restore achieves that magic. The historic Gospel we recover is always but the Gospel story and the Gospel portrait as the nascent Church knew it. And such knowledge has always a dreamlike touch about it. It is the knowledge of worshippers, not of immediate disciples. Read the last chapter of Matthew : there, surely, so it is. Look at the opening title-phrase of Mark : does not the very form of words confess that so, throughout this Gospel, it is going to be ? They may be asserting what is not true who find the doctrines of S. Paul in the pages of S. Mark. No such precise addition to Mark's unconscious art is to be suspected or expected. Not Paul or any other doctor of the Church has instructed him. But the subtler influence of the multitude of believers has affected his reminiscences. He enables us to look back on the events of fifty years ago as Greek-speaking converts looked back in the later decades of the apostolic age, and to think of the divine Master as they thought of Him. We cannot cross those fifty years and see and think of Him as Peter, James, and John, or as centurions, fishermen, lepers, demoniacs, saw and thought of Him then.

Let a careful reader, accustomed to read other books carefully, thoughtfully, take again and read through Mark; then Luke and Matthew ; with this introduction of Mr. Montefiore's in mind ; it is hardly possible that he will deny the force of the novel impression. Perhaps further consideration may remove the wish to deny it. Perhaps, after all, such a reflective Gospel may approve itself as the truest possible, or desirable. But, leaving that to be considered presently, let us first ask whether we are so absolutely cut off from recovery of the plain, primitive Daybook as the new critics think.

## VI

## *THE NEUTRAL TRADITION*

A VERY high merit in Mr. Streeter's book is his exposition of the gradual, complex way in which the Gospels reached their permanent form. He resuscitates with precision what the old theorists of the 'oral' Gospel put forth somewhat too fancifully, the large, flowing idea of a story variously repeated and through repetition winning regularity. One important characteristic of the process is the connection between development of narrative and development of text. No special scholarship is needed to understand what that means. Any one who uses the Revised Version knows how often a marginal note tells how 'some' or 'many ancient authorities' insert, omit, or read different words from those printed in the text. That indicates the variations in the wording, sometimes in the essential meaning, of the New Testament which are still to be observed in extant manuscripts, in versions, in quotations made by ancient authors; and these still extant witnesses prove that in the early Church there were persons and places concerned to preserve or restore the original apostolic words of the New Testament; but that elsewhere too, there was 'a vigorous and popular ecclesiastical life, little scrupulous as to the letter of venerated writings, or as to their permanent function in the future, in comparison with supposed fitness for immediate and obvious edification.'

A Group of Disciples.

So writes Dr. Hort in his *Introduction to the New Testament in Greek* ; a very delightful, masterly book, a treatise of textual criticism which is also (without pretension to being such) a philosophical history of the Church. It is indeed the chief of books about the text of Holy Scripture and the development of the collected New Testament. But it was written fifty years ago ; fresh material has come to hand since then ; and Mr. Streeter claims genuine discipleship of Dr. Hort in correcting while he follows him. Mr. Streeter finds local texts corresponding to the local traditions of narrative in the four chief early churches. Thus the earliest texts we can recover are already variant. And their variety is not of spontaneous growth : it has been directed by the idiosyncrasies of places and persons.

Dr. Hort, elaborating, simplifying, completing the partial views of the evidence which were his heritage from a line of justly famous predecessors, distributed the ‘ documents ’ not by place but by genealogical descent, and discovered three lines of such descent in the early period, even in the second century of the Christian era. Two of these lines were, like Mr. Streeter’s ‘ local ’ texts, influenced by the conscious purposes of men—by the needs or tastes of churches, or by the scruples of scholars. But besides these, Dr. Hort believed that yet another line could be traced with certainty ; in which changes, indeed, and errors had intruded, but of a less fatal character. For the development along this line had been natural, spontaneous, or as he styled it, ‘ neutral.’

That is the point at issue between Dr. Hort and his disciple Mr. Streeter. Dr. Hort believed a neutral text has left its traces till to-day and can be recovered, can be still preserved. Mr. Streeter does not believe in that possibility : he does not even believe that a ‘ neutral text ’ ever existed.

Dr. Hort’s *Introduction* is nearly fifty years old. Mr. Streeter may well add to it and sometimes correct. Oftener he has to confirm its anticipations. And the *Introduction* has the classic sobriety of permanent judgement : ‘ The works of those who have stood the test of ages have a claim to that respect and veneration to which no modern can pretend.’ The interwoven interest of text and narrative tradition is real, on the showing of both scholars. And something substantial in the narrative tradition can be extricated by patient tact, if it be recognized that there is a neutral line of transmission in narrative as in text.

This sometimes appears in altered phrases. For instance: 'Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but God' becomes in Matthew 'Why speakest thou of goodness,' etc.; obscuring the frank acceptance of our common humanity which doubtless was characteristic of the Lord Jesus in the very days of His flesh. Like this is the omission of the words 'with anger' in all but Mark's version of the healing of the withered hand. In the impersonal 'neutral' narrative these had no offence: to the reflective evangelists of the secondary line a feeling of *lèse-majesté* was roused, and they modified by conscious omission.

Heads of two Apostles.

More often the modifying is by addition. Here text and narrative develop close together, and hence the loose expression 'prefer the shorter reading' has become first a rule of thumb in textual criticism, then an old-fashioned crudity which modern critics refuse to take into account. But such a manner of putting the actual case is idle. In textual criticism taste, guesses, probabilities of what scribes would be likely to do, are but elementary prelude to the impersonal discernment which documentary evidence effects. And development of narrative repeatedly coincides with modification of text. Take one example out of many from the conclusion of Luke :

> And He led them out until they were over against Bethany : and He lifted up His hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He parted from them, [and was carried up into heaven.] And they [worshipped Him, and] returned to Jerusalem with great joy : and were continually in the temple, blessing God.

The Revised Version has marginal notes on the words in brackets which 'some ancient authorities omit.' And if we read the passage as the ancient authorities present it, do we not recover a fragment of the 'neutral' narrative, of the contemporary impression, the mystery rather than the miracle of the Ascension ?

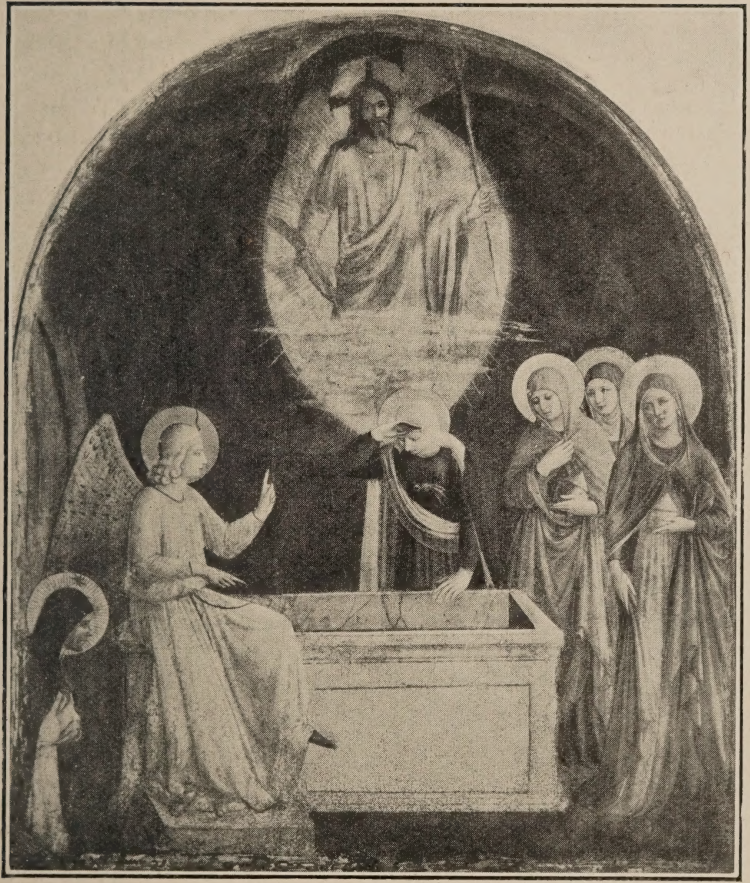
'The Maries.'

We may carry the 'feeling after and haply finding' of such a piece of exact narrative a little farther. At the beginning of Acts there is another description of the Ascension. It is fuller. It is stranger. Is it more miraculous or more matter-of-fact in style ? The word we want is 'naive.' Thus the 'unlearned and ignorant,' the 'ancient disciples' in the primitive Church at Jerusalem, told and told again the story, so wonderful but so natural to them who were living a new life which was every day wonderful, directly governed by the Spirit of

Jesus, exalted by daily expectation of His advent with clouds and glory. From the lips of such primitive Christians S. Luke gathered material for the opening chapters of his Acts ; and his inspiration was of so artistic a kind that he would not spoil the charm of their truth by translating it into the science of history. Thus we have three descriptions of the Ascension : two are influenced by ecclesiastical and by popular piety : one still survives, discoverable in ' ancient authorities ' for text, which is ' neutral,' and preserves the plain, unvarnished narrative sought for.

And still we are not at the end of our resources. In Luke the events from the Resurrection onward all take place at Jerusalem. At Jerusalem the Lord rose, ascended, and His disciples became the Church and started on their Christian enterprise. But in Matthew ' the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw Him, they worshipped Him : but some doubted.' Those last six words have a rather curiously double ring, partly ' neutral,' partly not. And so the narrative continues to the conclusion. The chief point is, however, that in Matthew the disciples do go to Galilee, and Luke's continuous issue of events at Jerusalem is broken. That is in accordance with what Matthew records as said by the angel at the tomb to the Maries : ' He is risen from the dead ; and lo, He goeth before you into Galilee ; there shall ye see Him : lo, I have told you.'

But the whole of Mark's narrative of the Resurrection should be compared. Mark tells of ' a young man, sitting on the right side of the tomb, arrayed in a white robe.' Mark does not call this young man an angel, and readers who are wont to pay the kind of atten-



The Resurrection.

tion to these narratives which we are here essaying, will be conscious that it would jar their sense of fitness if he did. But that does not mean a diminishing of grandeur. The appearance of this young man was no ordinary matter.

The women ‘ were amazed.’ And throughout Mark’s brief mysterious record of that Easter dawn, wonder and awe disturb and restrain, as those women then, so the reader of to-day, and so too (we are sure) the original disciples when they spoke of these things.

> And they went out, and fled from the tomb ; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them : and they said nothing to any one ; for they were afraid.

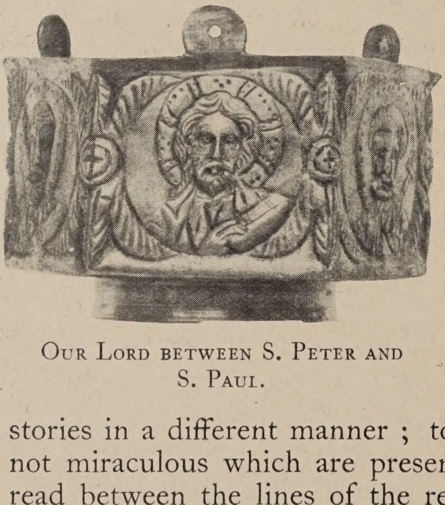
Twelve verses follow in our English Bible and in the common Greek text, the *Textus Receptus.* These verses are of a quite different style, for matter and for manner. The Revised Version leaves a space, and introduces them with a marginal note : ‘ The two oldest Greek manuscripts, and some other authorities, omit from verse 9 to the end. Some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel.’ Few who have paid attention to such questions have any doubt to-day that these twelve verses form no part of the original Gospel according to Mark. It is, however, generally supposed that some further matter did conclude the original. It is conjectured that the evangelist’s autograph, or the one very early copy of it from which all others are descended, was mutilated by accident ; and that the evangelist went on, like the other evangelists, to tell of the appearance of the risen Lord and perhaps of the Ascension. Perhaps this is not pure conjecture, but it is nearly so ; there is no evidence, but some inference is reasonable.

Yet the abruptness and the ‘ were afraid ’ are characteristic of Mark. One notable scholar, Wellhausen, in his admirable brief commentary on Mark, writes that it would be *Schade*, a shame or pity, to add anything to this narrative : any addition would spoil it. Is he not right ? Doubtless appearances of the risen Lord did follow. S. Paul appeals to some of these in witness of the Resurrection. Can we read 1 Corinthians xv in the whole Pauline context, and suppose that such historical events were the fount from which his own faith sprang? At any rate does not Mark (in this shortest form) convey us to something earlier, deeper, more mysterious? He preserves, revives, the very impression taken by the Maries in that first hour of the Easter dawn, when the eternal broke through the use and wont of the senses, and the presence of the risen Lord was known, not seen. Here once more is a 'neutral' narrative mediated by a neutral text.

# VII

## *THE ARCHETYPE*

IF a reader of the Gospels will go through the three Synoptic Gospels, selecting and comparing the 'neutral fragments' (as here these have been styled): if he will repeat the study, comparing, considering, again and again: he will gradually shape for himself a comprehensive idea of these pieces. Hence he will go on to interpret by this means the rest of the narrative. He will find himself induced to reject little as untrue to history. But he will often find that he would be inclined to tell the stories in a different manner; to explain some deeds as not miraculous which are presented as miraculous; to read between the lines of the recorded teaching of our Lord, and gather hence a purport which is not quite the purport understood by the evangelists.



Our Lord between S. Peter and S. Paul.

In doing this he will be making, roughly, a modern life of Jesus Christ. But that modernity brings risk. It suggests possibilities which were not possible in Gospel days, in Gospel places : and it prevents belief in manners, ideas, tempers of mind and body, unknown to our civilization, yet real in Jerusalem or Galilean villages long ago. Can we imagine the kingdom of God, or the casting out of demons, as people expected or experienced them ? The Last Judgement, the coming on the clouds, the cleansing of the temple ; have we, with our ideas—our kind of ‘ faith ’—a standard by which to measure the historical character of the record in the Gospels ?

The force of these queries may be felt by any one who will go through a short course of reading in modern lives of Christ. These are interesting, much of the ancient scenes and habits is noted in them. They are edifying, for they break away from such antiquarian notes to apply the Spirit of the Gospel to the conscience of to-day. But in both cases history is deserted.

The precarious value of the modern conscience as a test of accuracy in ancient chronicles is very apparent in Shelley's essay on Christianity, a crude, thoughtful, sincere performance, wholesomely disturbing to our thoughtless, complacent, uncritical adaptations of the Gospel.

A noble book like *Ecce Homo* cleanses and stimulates, but surely in very different range and direction from the Gospels in their freshness ; and especially S. Matthew which it touches most nearly.

Perhaps the largest, fairest, most natural and faithful attempt at such interpretation yet made is not a life of Christ but the memory of Jesus the Master as His face, form, words, deeds, and obscure purpose and sequence in leadership, impressed a young Galilean who followed Him among the disciples, and wrote out his recollections in his Christian old age. This is Dr. E. A. Abbott's *Philochristus*, a beautiful piece of scholar-

A Teacher and his Hearers.

ship, written in a plain Elizabethan English which children enjoy, restrained yet free in sincerest piety. In this book the primitive mind really seems to be recovered: at least it is respected. But after all it is hardly the 'neutral' narrative which Dr. Abbott recovers or constructs; it is more like the completed Gospels themselves, a reflective memory playing back through the atmosphere of the nascent Church.

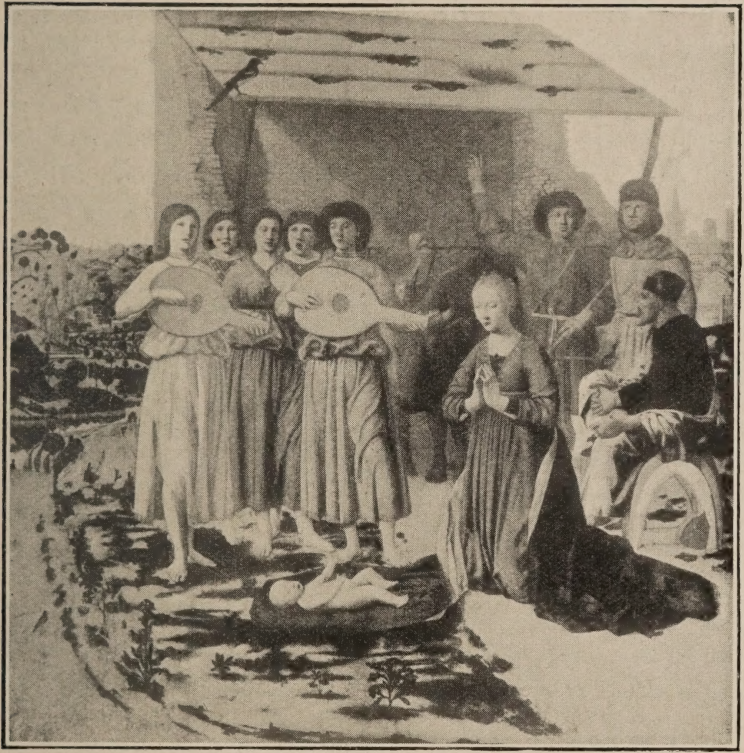
So then to compose a Life of Christ is a perilous undertaking: it involves a risk of adding, omitting, or conforming facts in accord with the fashionable conscience of our own day. Safety is only assured by faithfulness to the neutral tradition which we discern, here and there, more or less clearly, running through the completed records which have been left to us by our evangelists. It may be we shall find, when we have worked through the whole New Testament, that the latest Gospel, 'according to John,' is a divine Life of this kind. John continually presses inward, beneath the lively pictures of Matthew and Luke and even Mark. John presents the Life and Person of the Lord afresh, in what was a modern manner when the Fourth Gospel was composed. But he checks his modernity by constant respect to the primordial neutrality.

And there we catch a hint. John is the Gospel of the Very Manhood. It is obviously the Gospel of the complement, or antithesis, to that, the Gospel of the Eternal Word. But this truth is so far from being allowed to supersede the other that, in very many points, the real manhood is more insistently preserved than even the Synoptists preserved it. 'He dwelt among us' and, in most homely affection, 'we beheld His glory.'

That frank acceptance of the real manhood of our

Lord will prove itself to the student as the most constant element in the neutral tradition. Such acceptance will be delightful at its first recognition. It is the best part of the delightfulness of Mr. Crum's book, and that book is perhaps the best of the many books about the Ministry which are so welcomed for their delightfulness just now. But this acceptance presently embarrasses the sincere student. It implies recognition of the human limitations of the Lord. Mark tells how in the synagogue He looked on His antagonists 'with anger.' We comment easily enough, 'with righteous anger.' But when we hear how Jesus cursed the fig-tree which disappointed His hope of refreshment ; how next morning the curse was found to have produced effect ; how thereupon He spoke of the power of faith even to move material things ; then added, 'And whensoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one ; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses' ; and when we find Matthew removing this strange precept, reverie, personal confession, or whatever it be styled, from the context, and Luke omitting the whole incident : what are we to think of this ? Is this even moral limitation ?—'though He were a son yet learned He obedience by suffering.' Is it expansion by limitation, an enlargement of the conventional conscience of our day ?

Or think of our Lord's teaching about judgement, death, and life eternal. We may suppose that in His parables He either condescended to or shared ideas then current in Galilee. If He is all that we believe Him to be, questions arise about even that submission to temporary limits which are not without difficulty. But suppose Him to have generally taught on the line of 'The kingdom of God is within you,' and so more in accordance



'VERY GOD AND VERY MAN.'

with our notions of to-day ; still there remains the perpetual limit to human thought, the confusion of eternity with succession in time ; so that it was impossible for Him, as for us, to tell truly what death means, what is 'consequent' thereon.

We need not dwell upon the 'foolishness' of the obscure, Galilean incarnation, nor the 'scandal of the Cross.' Quite brief reflection will convince any reader of the Gospels that if the story be stripped to bare realism it does become difficult to repose in the beauty of its comfort. And yet—

When we consider the persistent evil, the misery of human life in all ages past, the dominance of pain and evil still, the state of things around and the conscience within ourselves ; how hopeless all appears, how illusive any gospel. But ' come unto Me all ye heavy laden . . . My yoke is easy . . . I will give you rest.' Turn from all this, or with all this burden, and read the Passion in the Gospels. The narrative affords not the solution of the problem. It is hard to say more precisely than by metaphor what it does effect. But it does point to a way through, not plain to see but reasonable to search for still and press towards, a light shining in darkness which the darkness comprehends not.

## VIII

## *THE SON OF MAN: ACCORDING TO S. LUKE*

THAT result comes from the Gospel narratives as we have them, the full narratives of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and of John : the primitive tradition already decorated by church faith and worship, by the piety of the early and of the concluding apostolic age. However earnestly we strive to recover the earlier form, we are bound to read, mark, and learn the later books. Even as checks to our critical endeavour that is necessary : as we read our eyes are opened to larger consistencies, we gain intelligence. Also we are prepared for the further continuous development of the whole story through the rest of the New Testament. Also the introduction of theology into the pure history we have been seeking is more than salutary : it is the way of truth. For there is no real gospel without theology. What is a theologian but one who knows himself a sinful man in a saddened world, and earnestly desires to know whether Jesus Christ did really come from God to save the world ? And these completed Gospels are theological.

And therefore beautiful. First and last we read them for the happiness of reading. We read each by itself, straight through, as though there were no other ; and so enjoy its inimitable character. And we read the three in their succession ; and so perceive the rich unity and universal outreach of these events, words, persons, of the Master and His disciples and His adversaries—the ‘ brothers for whom Christ died.’

We have already examined, though cursorily, S.Mark. Let us turn to Luke.

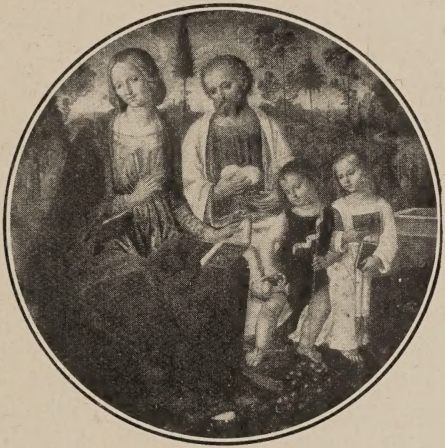
The plan may be largely spaced thus :

A. Preface.
B. Gospel of the Boyhood.
C. Ministry, in Galilee chiefly.
D. Journey to Jerusalem.
E. Passion, Resurrection, Ascension.

B and D are Luke's particular possessions. In D, the long parenthesis between the Transfiguration and the entry into Jerusalem, he gathers not a little teaching which in Matthew is arranged more closely and orderly elsewhere : he also has a series of parables of a kind not found elsewhere, stories, not ‘ likenesses,’ sometimes extended by unexpected second thoughts like propositions with riders. This Gospel starts from Jerusalem and the temple. After the Entry on Palm Sunday there is no word of a return to Galilee. The last verse leaves the disciples in the temple.

The preface is terse and vigorous, a single woven period, gathering like a wave and breaking on the finale, ‘ certainty.’ The historian professes to have made an orderly account of the origins of the Church's faith, after predecessors but drawing from contemporary evidence, with such diligence that his friend, patron, or ideal convert, the noble Theophilus, may hold what he has been taught with instructed assurance. This is a European manner of treating history. The style is a scholar's dignified Greek.

The Gospel of the Boyhood—to distinguish it from the overlapping Gospel of the Childhood in Matthew—is written in the biblical style of the Greek Old Testament : for the early Church throughout the West spoke Greek and received its new Bible and read its inherited Bible in Greek. The style suits the contents of the section, which is composed from the plain accounts of things collected by the historian from old Christians of Jerusalem. We are in the circle of priestly families in Judean hill-country, kinsfolk of Joseph and Mary, such people as the Psalmist called 'the quiet in the land,' but with intensity expecting 'the consolation of Israel.'


The Holy Family.

That intense expectation links this Introduction with the Baptism and opening ministry: Luke ignores the interval which Mark indicates and which years later John filled up. Luke writes how :

> As the people were in expectation, and all men reasoned in their hearts concerning John, whether haply he were the Christ ; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water ; but there cometh He that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose : He shall baptize you with holy Spirit and with fire.

The ministry opens in the synagogue at Nazareth with the reading from the book of Isaiah :

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
> Because He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor :

> He hath sent Me to proclaim release to the captives,
> And recovery of sight to the blind,
> To set at liberty them that are bruised,
> To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

And to-day, He said, this prophecy is fulfilled. With words of grace He won the hearts of all the listeners. Then came words of warning and His old friends were for killing Him ; words of warning, or of yearning, or of wider outlook, ‘ No prophet is acceptable in his native country ’ ; and presently we read (according to the ancient text) that He began to preach in the synagogues of Judea. That might possibly be a general term for Palestine, but it looks as though Luke is here (as elsewhere) half-way to John : his broad survey of historical evidence enlarges and complicates the Galilean Gospel of the kingdom which sufficed for Mark. The Sermon on the Mount comes into this division of this Gospel, but only in part, and in a different setting from Matthew’s, and with slight, but not insignificant, variations. ‘ Blessed are the poor,’ it begins, not ‘ poor in spirit ’ ; and in this Gospel, as in Acts the sequel, the problem of riches and poverty often seems to engage the author. At the end of the Sermon, as in Matthew, the similitude of the houses on sand and rock is given : but whereas in Matthew the sandy, summer-drying torrent bed of the Palestinian desert and the rude hut of the shepherd-dweller is depicted—racy of the soil ; in Luke it is a house with foundations, and a regular river flood ; the imagination of a European traveller instead of the eye of the native upon the object.

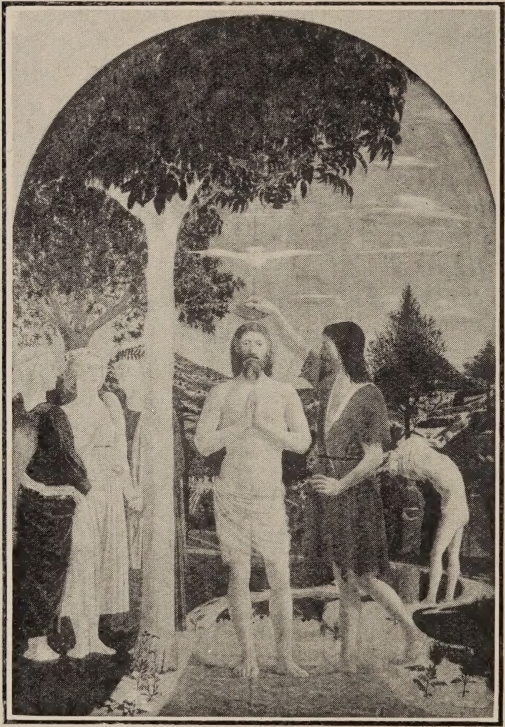
In this, as in all the four Gospels, the Feeding of the Five Thousand is a turning point. In Mark the significance is obscured by the interpolation of a good deal of matter between this and the confession of S. Peter. In

John that confession itself is very Johanninely modified, but the connection is emphasized : the miracle becomes a sign : it is a Messianic feast, an anticipatory sacrament of the Feast of the Kingdom—the people were for making Him king, says John. So in Luke the connection is underlined by omitting intermediate narrative and bringing the confession into noticeable sequence upon the Five Thousand. On the other hand Luke ignores the Feeding of the Four Thousand, which in Mark and Matthew serves to show that this remarkable Messianic vaticination was repeated, thought upon, remembered ; and that the words and gestures of the Last Supper had more than a similarity of chance.

In Luke, as in Mark, the Confession leads on to the Transfiguration and its attendant healing of the demoniac boy. Very Lucan are certain touches in the wording here. Mark's surely historical preservation of the Lord's bracing indignation—' If thou canst ! All things " can " to one who trusts '—is tamed as it was tamed in the later text of Mark. On the other hand the father in S. Luke calls his boy *monogenês*, ' my only son, my dearest.' And then Luke parts company with his predecessor, and enters upon the long chapters of the journey to Jerusalem.

This is a little Gospel in itself. It opens with solemnity and power, enforced by unusual choice of words : ' It came to pass in the fulfilment of the days of His assumption He hardened His face for the journey to Jerusalem and commissioned messengers in front of Him.' Then the Samaritan village ; the rebuke of James and John ; the testing of volunteers ; the Son of Man with nowhere to lay His head—in right context here, whereas in Matthew's context the phrase seems, at that stage of the ministry, exaggerated.

Here, however, it rings true enough. We see vividly the Master and His little company of heroes going forth homeless with an awful hope on this last enterprise of the Christ, as they would fain believe; or of the Son of Man, as He Himself is prepared to go and die.



The Baptism of our Lord.

But soon the movement of the travellers is lost to sight. That kind of vividness is not the art that Luke is ambitious to compass. A second ministry, vague as to place and time, begins. There is art here, frank and careless of pedantic nicety. Luke has a large collection of peculiar matter, didactic, theological in the main. It is, as he perceives, highly important. It will represent the Lord Jesus in a larger, broader light than the Galilean Sea shed round Him. He said things which look strangely free from the mere traditions of synagogue instruction. His teaching was not only by picture language, but also by something much nearer philosophical thought. And He had a tender sympathy, wide, virile, indignant yet rich in understanding all temptation, a doctrine of forgiveness, which had not yet been properly recorded. The kingdom of God in which He dwelt was more heavenly, yet not so contrary to this present world of duties, needs, afflictions as the simpler saints expected. All this will appear from the new material Luke has to display, and in this Gospel of the Second Ministry he will display it ; 'in order,' but a freely rhythmed order of his own.

The contents are not all his peculiar property. Partly he shares with Matthew. Therein it may be he draws from Q. If so he seems at first sight to keep to Q more faithfully than Matthew did. Matthew arranged his teaching into broad, plain masses with obvious significance. Luke allows fragments and shreds to come in here and there, as though just copying out what he found. But the inference cannot be quite so facile. We do not know what sort of a document Q was ; whether its arrangement was casual or on a plan. The carelessness in Luke is the masterful carelessness in unimportant details of an author who thus heightens rather than mars his main effect.

Not to return to these problems of origins, let us rather notice the different, and probably quite independent, manner in which Luke and Matthew handle some of this common matter. Luke records in this division a mission of seventy disciples, distinct from the mission of the Twelve, and in close connection with this the reception of these disciples on their triumphant return and the profound meditation to which their success moved the Lord. Matthew records this meditation also. He places it near, but not directly after, the mission of the Twelve. It comes in his Gospel with a vaguer note of time. It is a dogmatic oracle important by its own solitary weight, and leading to a conclusion of pathetic beauty, a consolation for the Church in all ages :

> Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, My burden light.

That sublime invitation is not in Luke. But the still more impressive preceding sublimity is in both Matthew and Luke :

> In that same hour He rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes : yea, Father ; for so it was well pleasing in Thy sight. All things have been delivered unto Me by My Father, and no one knoweth Who the Son is, save the Father ; and Who the Father is, save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.

Here, it is often said, we find the link between the Synoptists and S. John. Here in Matthew and Luke is that transcendental doctrine of the Person of Christ which inspires the Gospel according to John. True : but perhaps not quite with the kind of trueness which is formally implied. John and the Synoptists are indeed at one concerning the deity of Jesus Christ. But so they are concerning His real manhood. And what deepens and eternizes the doctrine in John of the Word made flesh is, as the Athanasian Creed expresses it, the continual declaration of the 'One, not by conversion of the godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God.' And the manhood, explicitly in John, implicitly in the Synoptic title Son of Man, is inclusive. Not Jesus of Nazareth alone but all who trust and come with Him to the Father shall be sons and in Him know the Father. As in the prologue to John, ‘We beheld His glory, glory as of the only-begotten from the Father,’ so here with the repeated ‘the Father . . . the Son,’ the English idiom would be more justly observed by using the other article, ‘A father . . . a son’ (as in R.V. margin in John), the indefinite article in its typical significance.

Leading the Blind.

This way of reading the Synoptic passage offers itself less obviously in Matthew than in Luke. Matthew indeed is dogmatic, is like the imperative, terse grandeur of a creed. Luke with his introductory context and his unliturgical conclusion—he says what he has to say and leaves it—helps us to understand and heightens mystery by homeliness.

The initial popularity had waned. The ministry of healing and teaching prospered not. Disillusion, disappointment, enmity for love. The second mission, the

Seventy, was tried ; and the envoys returned marvellously successful. The Lord was glad but with another gladness, with another assurance. ‘ I was watching indeed,’ He said, ‘ Satan’s lightning-fall, but all these things, success and failure, are of My Father’s ordering. Father and Son, inward, imperishable trust and mutual understanding : that is the all-sufficient. As father knows son and son father, such is My secret and all is well. And some of these My friends are sharing My secret, and I have authority to reveal it more and more.’ That is Gospel as Luke read it ; as, later and clearer still, John read it.

The passage opens in Luke with ‘ In that hour He rejoiced in the Holy Spirit.’ In Matthew the Holy Spirit is mentioned, a little before this incident, as destined to defend the disciples in days to come of persecution. But the title comes as a rarity. It is after the ministry in Galilee is finished, in Acts, Paul, John, that we hear continually of the Holy Spirit. The Synoptic silence had impressed John, and is one of the problems he shaped his Gospel to solve. ‘ The Spirit was not yet ’ he notes in an early chapter. Luke, like John, reflects on his material, muses on problems, and writes a Gospel which is already growing to a ‘ Life of Christ.’ There is more in Luke about the Holy Spirit than in Mark and Matthew. An ancient, though not the original, reading in the shortened Lucan form of the Lord’s Prayer seems to show how the first students of this Gospel had noticed the peculiarity. So Gregory of Nyssa quotes, ‘ Father, hallowed be Thy Name. Let the Holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us.’

There is more, too, about prayer in general in this Gospel than in Matthew and Mark. It is from Luke that we collect our Lord’s habit of spending whole nights in prayer before crises in His ministry. And the atmosphere of prayer, of spiritual entering into the unseen world which is not far away but in the heart of history, is diffused throughout his Gospel.

The especial Lucan parables are gathered into this division. The vivid picture of the rich fool building his new barns not aware that before morning 'they'—the labourers he has oppressed—will take his life : the idylls or little pictures of the woman searching for the lost coin, the shepherd and the one lost sheep, with their completing story of the prodigal son—the large Lucan doctrine of forgiveness—no change in the Father's heart at all—God forgiving all along, not waiting for His child's penitence, man's penitence ; doctrine inherited from Hosea (that favourite prophet of the Lord Jesus) and developed by S. Paul, but with his apostolic doctrine of the Cross which Luke in his Gospel does not touch.

Story instead of parable, or parable in form of story, is the mark of these Lucan pieces : prodigal son, good Samaritan, rich man and Lazarus, the nobleman who goes to a far country to receive a kingdom. In this last the Gospel comes into touch with political history of the time, and that explains the sudden fierceness of 'these my enemies who would not have me rule over them' ; which is realistic narrative outside the didactic purpose of the parable, and yet (in the curious Lucan undertone or afterthought) reminding the reader that these further considerations are forced upon us when we face the whole bitter complication of actual life.

These after-thoughts are also characteristic. A good example is given by the story of the unjust steward. The plain, first purport is that Christians must be as earnest in their art of holy living as men of the world are even in

Pilgrims approaching Jerusalem.

their rascality. There is no place for an amateur in the following of Christ. So far, the best commentary on the parable is the Lucan intensity of 'I came to cast fire upon the earth ; and what will I, if it is already kindled ? I have a baptism to be baptized with ; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished ! Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth ? I tell you, Nay ; but rather division.' But after that elementary lesson has been taught, a rider is added in which the Lord Jesus (not the ' lord ' who commended the clever, wicked man of business) corrects hasty absoluteness about the ' kingdom of God ' and ' taking no thought for the morrow,' and declares that men of business may in their very faithfulness to their secular profession be doing the great King's work. ' The kingdom of God is in the midst of you ' and the occupations of the world are sacraments of eternity. And (so delicately are these terse discourses woven) that makes the reader think again of the first part of the story and perceive that even there the main purpose was to show how friendship is the heart of worldly business ; yea, even in dishonest business, friendship enters as a styptic, cleansing, and vivifying.

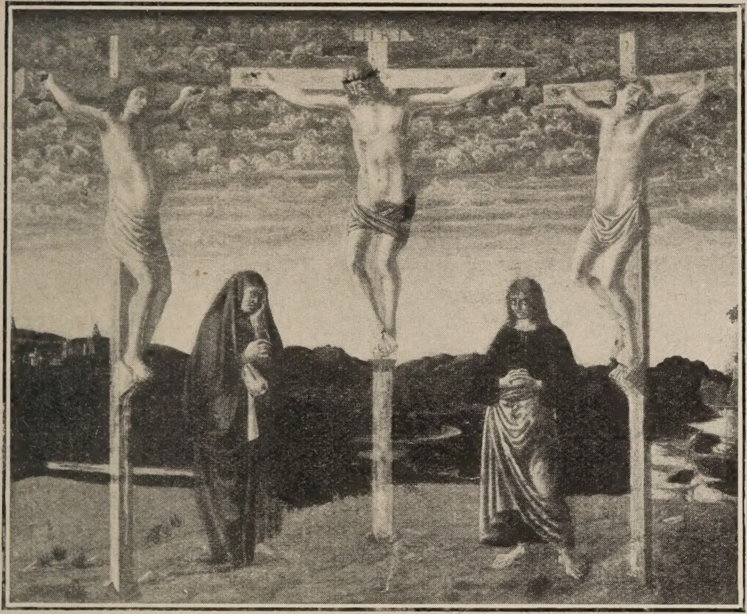
There indeed is a hint of tolerance which shocks convention. Again we muse on other Lucan pages ; the publican and Pharisee, the rich man who, in torment, cared for his brothers, and whom we cannot but believe Jesus loved.

With chapter xix Luke joins the common narrative again, and leads through Jericho to the entrance into Jerusalem. He tells of Bartimaeus but names him not. His herald is a publican again, Zacchaeus. Mean figures are these publicans. The lowest agents of the imperial revenue, they were disliked by the empire-scorning Jewish freeman. They earned their living with difficulty and succumbed to the temptations of their position. No doubt Zacchaeus had wronged some of his neighbours, and he had perhaps made a modest fortune. By means of it he made (like Levi with his farewell feast) a princely penitence. Half he gave to the poor, with the other half he restored fourfold, and started the new life penniless. Luke had at least one taste in common with his friend Paul ; he liked an extravagant generosity.

The entrance into Jerusalem is described with that graphic art in which Luke excels. But his art is no ornament. His feeling for the sympathetic, truly human Messiahship of the Lord tinges the whole ; yet most plainly in the preluding lament over the blind and doomed city : to him indeed the metropolis of the Christian faith. And this appears again in his version of the apocalyptic discourse over the splendour of the temple, which in Mark has no indication of the siege and destruction but is almost wholly apocalyptic of the Last Day of this world, but in Luke is reminiscent of the tragedy, and like the Epistle to the Hebrews points to the more modern and really spiritual idea of the Advent here and now : in the successive watches of the night of man's expectant history Christ comes.

The Last Supper in Luke arrests attention. In the ancient text the Cup precedes the Loaf and there is no second cup. The meal is introduced by the words, ‘ With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer,’ words of affection ; are they a hint of history ? Was this Supper, as Mark certainly makes it, the Passover on the regular Passover evening ? Did John know better ? Or did John take Luke's introduction as a clue to sorting out the variety of tradition, and hence decide that the Supper with all its anticipatory loving-kindness and theology took place the evening before the proper Passover ?

The Passion in Luke penetrates like nature, tender and tremendous. The Agony and the disciples ‘ sleep-



The Crucifixion.

ing for sorrow' : the trial in the high priest's house and the Lord turning and looking upon Peter : the strange adjournment to Herod's military court, his wonder at this harmless revolutionary and his kindly scorn : the tumult of priests and crowd before Pilate, and the sudden silence when he at last gives way to their violence—a characteristic Lucan handling of a mob, which has parallels in Acts : the procession to Calvary and the word to the women, the 'daughters of Jerusalem' : the words at the Cross, no 'Eloi, Eloi' but 'Father, forgive them,' 'This day in Paradise,' 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit' : the centurion's 'innocent man,' not 'Son of God,' a touch of Luke's humanism which after all goes deeper into real mystery : and the *Theoria*, the *reverie* :

> And all the multitude that came together to this sight, when they beheld the things that were done, returned smiting their breasts. And all His acquaintance, and the women that followed with Him from Galilee, stood afar off, seeing these things.

Only S. Jerome, retouching the Old Latin version of Psalm lxxxviii, brings the very scene to the mind's eye—' re-minds '—like that.

And finally in Luke, after the Resurrection, comes Emmaus. No wonder he passes by the Galilean traditions. Here is all he wants, addition or confusion would spoil this exquisite example of the risen Lord's appearance. Here all is natural, all spiritual. So the Lord did show Himself : so still He shows Himself, perhaps even visibly to some. The brief-told incident that follows, the appearance to the Twelve and those with them is like the opening stories of Gospel and Acts, naive narrations of old Jerusalem disciples. Luke gives it as he heard it, and lets those who will interpret according to Emmaus.

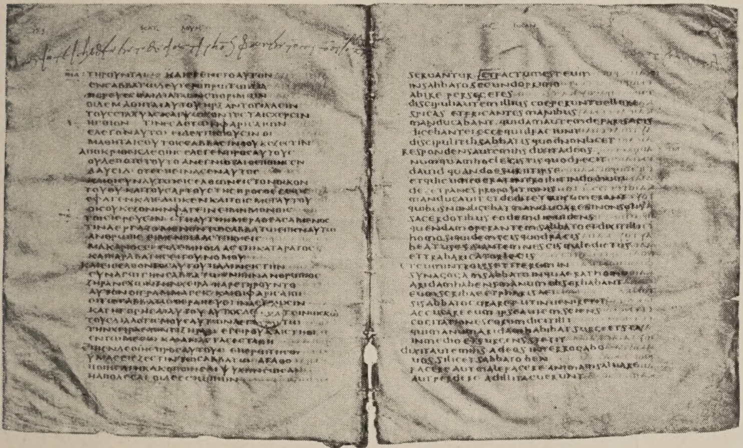
And so, with Bethany, parting benediction, temple praise, this Gospel closes. It is a historian's work and suits our educated conscience : a Western work, understandable by Europeans : it is poetic, and poetry fires every heart : it cares for the poor, the weak, for women, and for enslaved alien nations : it is for freedom and nearly all the aspirations of our maturing sense of human obligations.

It is an artist's prelude to the philosophy of John, and reflects in a lucid, natural glow the wonder of ' the Son of Man.' It is the Gospel of the penitent.

Why in Cardinal Newman's romance of *Callista* is

Luke the Gospel which the African bishop had among his few books ?

Luke is a historian and alone among evangelists provides notes of time and place when he sets out on his narration. But these are of the briefest, and brief as they are the modern critic finds two mistakes therein. That, after all, was not how he aimed at applying his art, but to tell with accurate assurance the private Christian history which was his business. Nor will this Every Man's companion to the ancient story be used for discussion of dates or other matters of critical science which, being indeed of much interest and importance, may be found excellently treated in other books.



CODEX BEZAE.
Fifth or sixth century. S. Luke vi. 1–9 in Greek and Latin.

On S. Luke the favourite commentary of the writer of these pages is Dr. Arthur Wright's *S. Luke*, an admiration which will appear a confession of eccentricity to unsympathetic readers. For Dr. Wright's commentary, like his *Harmony*, was made to illustrate his belated adhesion to the Oral Theory, which was the guiding light of another not easily superseded treatise, Westcott's *Introduction to the Gospels*.

Dr. Streeter's *Four Gospels*, with its theory of a *Proto-Luke*, offers at least the hint which is enough for the critical necessities of Every Man's volume here attempted. There may well have been two editions of Luke's work, but both made by himself. There may perhaps have been yet later editions of the completed work Luke left to the Church : that is a speculation we need not curiously consider here. His Gospel, as we have it, was certainly completed after the siege of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. A first draft might possibly have been made a good deal earlier. If so, and if he wrote Acts during the imprisonment of Paul at Rome, he may have afterwards revised the Gospel, made the revised Gospel the first volume of a twofold history, and Acts the second ; and perhaps took the opportunity of revising Acts also.

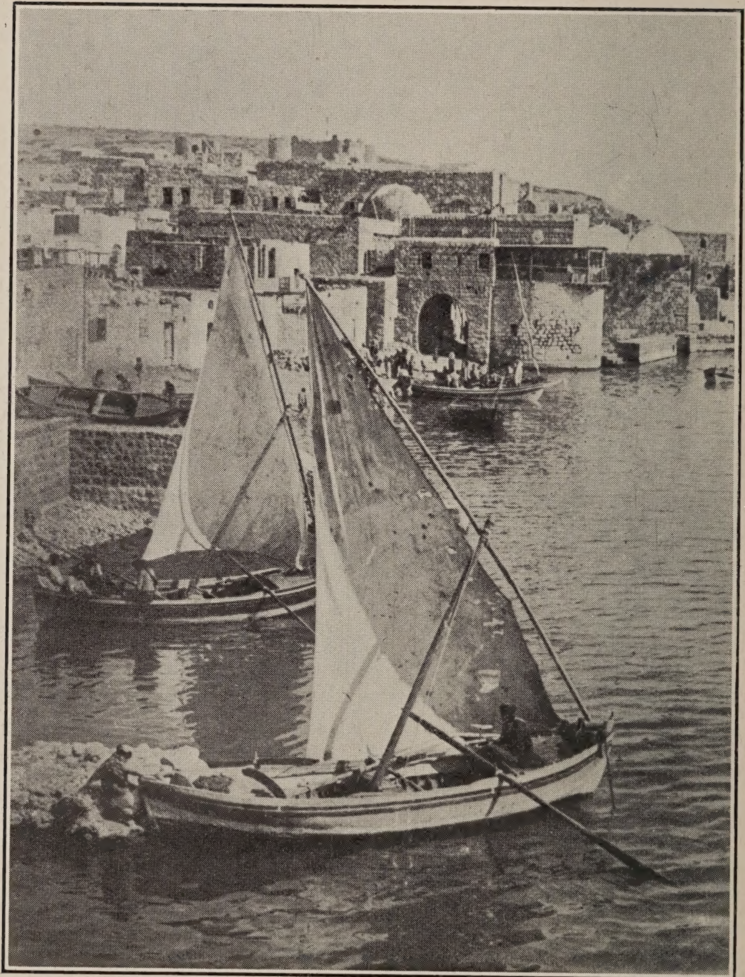
# IX

# *CHURCH AND KING: ACCORDING TO S. MATTHEW*

MATTHEW stands first of the four Gospels in ancient manuscripts as in modern Bibles. This position has tended to make it best known of the four. But in the main Matthew has won popularity by its character. It is broadly and grandly composed : makes distinct impression upon readers, even more so upon hearers who, reading but seldom for themselves, receive their knowledge of the Bible chiefly by listening to the lessons in church. And to such church-going Christians Matthew is especially congenial. It is the Church Gospel ; dogmatic in the primitive manner, perhaps hieratic is the appropriate word. It inaugurates the principles of Churchmanship.

A very early tradition asserts that 'Matthew composed the oracles in Hebrew and every one translated these as they could.' Such tradition is generally to be trusted, but as typically, not completely, expressing history. Early, rough criticism explained that these 'oracles' correspond to a collection of the Lord's words, presently described as Q ; and that this, translated into Greek and combined with narrative from Mark, became our Gospel according to Matthew. That is too easy a construction of a process which was probably gradual, in part spontaneous, now obscure.

The Gospel, as we study it and use analogy from other books of the Church, at least suggests liturgic influence.



Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee.

The great historic prayer books took form, and took revised successive forms, as continuous use prevailed to shape them. The stages of that process were associated with famous names. There was foreshortening in the perspective, typical summarizing in the adopted names.

Something of that kind may explain 'according to Matthew,' vague though our apprehension of the stages be. The 'oracles' went forth from Palestine to Greek, Syriac, Galatian, churches: were translated from their original Hebrew and Aramaic into the vernacular of their new home: were read in public worship: were moulded in public worship into 'perfections of ultimate utterance'; first as the several churches were disposed by taste or need; but the worshippers would say 'as the Spirit of Jesus gave them utterance'; then at last by common consultation of the leaders of church life and doctrine, bishops or their scholar-deputies, the one 'perfection' was authorized. There is little difficulty in imagining such freedom in modifying the original sketch. It was no doubt a mere sketch and required filling out for practical devotion: and scruples about the sacredness of text did not arise until the final text was fixed. The main difficulty is in finding long enough space of time for so gradual and anonymous a process. It can hardly have run the whole course by the end of the first century. But perhaps there is no need to set that limit. Not only for the Gospels but for many books of the New Testament we may, not inconsiderately, suppose that though their date and authorship be truly apostolic, they have come to us in revised editions. Such revision of Acts or of Apocalypse might account for not a little that needs accounting for in those books.

Some vagueness must be allowed. We cannot expose the process of development precisely. But to postulate development of that kind is not fanciful. It suits the facts. Matthew stands first in position and in popularity. It is a Gospel broadly, plainly, and grandly composed. It is dogmatic, hieratic, a source of authority for the institutional Church. It is the Church book *par excellence*. Earliest tradition derives it from ‘ oracles ’ promulgated through various ‘ translation.’ Such traditions, when examined, commonly prove to have symbolic value. In this case the brief statement points to a foreshortening of liturgic development. And instances can be quoted in support of the assertion. Thus an impressive dogmatically formulated commission to S. Peter as leader of the apostles is appended to the plain account in Mark of his confession at Caesarea Philippi. An apostolic commission for missionary duty with a formula for baptism is added to the account of the Ascension. Comfortable words ; ‘ Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden . . . ’ are added to the colloquy with the disciples returning from their preaching tour. The sentence has the perfect cadence which would be attained through frequent experimental use in sincere worship ; just as the Lord’s Prayer has by degrees attained a satisfying form in English worship and translation and repeated revision.

Again ; Matthew is apocalyptic to a bold degree. But Matthew is apocalyptic in a larger fashion than Mark is. Whereas the paradox in Mark springs from the contrast between the divine power which all who approach Him recognize in Jesus Christ, and the local, temporal limitation of His Messianic expectation, in Matthew a long vista of church activity, generation after generation, is envisaged. In Mark ‘The kingdom of God is at hand’;

JERUSALEM : FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

the end is imminent. In Matthew ‘ Repent therefore ’ is the emphatic command which is elaborated in that magnificent set piece The Sermon on the Mount. Therein the Law of the new kingdom ‘ here a little, there a little ’ is gathered up and, as it were, codified.

Codified indeed vitally, with infinite capacity for agelong application, the Sermon on the Mount is surely much misunderstood if taken as ‘ temporary ethics,’ as an absolute which could only operate while the end of the world was immediately looked for. No, it is a real absolute which outruns ages, and will always be impossible for man, yet possible for man with God. The ethics of the Sermon on the Mount are incomparably beautiful, severe, and plain, a plain day-book for those who trust and are debtors for their all and steadfastly purposed to lead the new life.

In the Sermon on the Mount, scattered precepts are brought together into an ordered whole. Such precepts have a homely vigour coming one by one, each in its actual time and place, its opportune occasion. Alas ! those times and places have often been mislaid, and even inspired evangelists have not always been able to recover them. Matthew's concentration has a kind of creative quality. The juxtaposition, the ideal unity, deepens and prolongs their influence. So with the grouped parables which follow. So with other 'sermons,' briefer yet continuous. For this Gospel is punctuated by discourses, as any reader will perceive who will be at the pains to notice how often and where the note recurs, 'It came to pass when He had finished these sayings.' Look at the primary commission to the Twelve ; at the prelude to the journey to Jerusalem ; before the Last Supper ; the last chapter of the whole.

This is the Gospel of the Lawgiver. It is also the Gospel of the King. Parables of judgement distinguish it, royal, authoritative, august. These parables need reverent reading. So read, their difficulty does not disappear. Life and morality, action and its consequences, the sadness and the tragedy of things as they really are, cannot be got rid of by shutting the eye to them. The multitude is aware of that, is realistic : and this Gospel is realistic. But the irrefragable doctrine of the forgiveness of sins runs through it as strongly as through the rest of the Bible, and when it is reverently read the King's grace is not less conspicuous in it than is the King's responsibility.

Herein, perhaps, we do catch something of that old Judaic flavour which used once to be ascribed to Matthew as characteristic. Ecclesiastical, hieratic, is a broader description and probably an apter. But the twain are easily connectible. The Church of God rather than the Church of Christ is the biblical designation. There has been, according to the New Testament, but one Church from the beginning. The Christian Church is no new beginning in history, according to the Acts of the Apostles. The Jewish Church became the Christian. And whenever the ecclesiastic, dogmatic, institutional aspect of the Church comes to the front the Judaic affinity is felt.

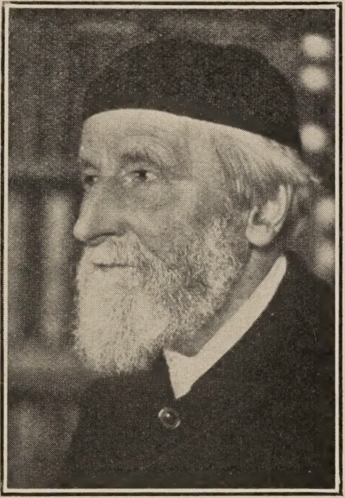
## X

## *YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER*

WHAT have we, then, in these three first Gospels? Three distinct portraits of one character. Character is the best word. There is little to help us even to imagine the face or stature of the Lord Jesus. The most vivid touches are always deeper. Here and there we get as it were a swift, partial sketch jotted down as with a pencil handled by one with his eye upon the object; but even these are notes of character rather than of feature. That character grows consistently, one and the same throughout. If Mark depicts a strong, apocalyptic personage, Matthew a royal master, Luke a tender, thoughtful friend, we still feel that our analysis is flimsy; the vital character is richer and abiding, it includes and transforms the fashions.

The three Gospels contain not a few of these rough sketches. They are as wholes written studies, and the analogy of pictures imperfectly applies. Mark is masterfully limited; Matthew and Luke more deliberately elaborated. And since character is the theme, Matthew and Luke must be allowed to have a farther insight. But withal a certain historical dimness begins to gather: there is retouching, filling in and explanation and suggestion, collection and recollection. As we read we become more and more aware that we are looking back upon a yesterday.

Then the page is turned, and in S. Paul's epistles we are suddenly transported into a clear shining to-day. Here is the pen, the very voice dictating to a pen, of an actor in present events. Here is a missionary of the Gospel telling directly what the Gospel is to himself; what he observes it doing among those who hear, accept, or reject it; how it is connected in his conscience with the earthly life and death of the Lord Jesus; what the power is to-day of the Lord's Resurrection; what the new life is which the present influence of His living Spirit inspires.


Dr. E. A. Abbott.

The letters of S. Paul are preserved in a corporate collection divided into three parts. In the first are letters of Paul the traveller and missionary. He writes from Achaia to Christians whom he has made in Thessalonica; from Ephesus to a church he has ordained in Corinth; to Christians in Galatia whose origin and environment is obscure, though in this letter there is fuller and more precise information about his own past history than in any other; and a long letter, almost a treatise, to the Roman Christians, which seems latest in date of writing, stands as a weighty introduction, a summary of thoughtful faith, at the beginning of the whole division.

An epistolary treatise of the same kind introduces the second division, which is made up of letters apparently written from Rome where Paul is in captivity, but with many friends enjoying free intercourse with him. The introductory epistle is addressed to Ephesus, but is evidently intended to be sent round to other places. It seems to be thus referred to in another letter, written with the spontaneous vigour of a real letter, to Colossae, and setting out a remarkable doctrine of the divine, eternal Person of Christ and of the Church as His living body, an organic unity in variety. With the public epistle to Colossae a short private letter is dispatched to Philemon, a leading member of the Colossian church, about a runaway slave, now returning to his owner, and as a convert of S. Paul's. Then there is a letter to the Macedonian church at Philippi with considerable details concerning Paul's life at Rome and the position of the Christians there.

Three letters remain, forming a third division, two addressed to Timothy, one to Titus, friends and servants of the apostle mentioned in other letters, each as playing important parts in his earlier missionary career, and now entrusted with special charges in Ephesus and Crete. The Second Epistle to Timothy seems to be the last communication of S. Paul. He is in prison, a more severe captivity than before. Only Luke is with him. He is expecting condemnation and death. These three letters are commonly styled the Pastoral Epistles. A set of regulations for church discipline is put forth in them. Such regulations might well be issued by a founder and ecclesiastical director such as Paul was, and the particularity of them quite fits the later stage of his career. But there is a difference of tone, of character. Only sometimes do we easily recognize the old freedom of S. Paul. These three epistles may be read as an appendix to the collection, as much-edited fragments of the apostle's writing.

One letter remains. The Epistle to the Hebrews has been included in the Pauline collection ever since the letters were first gathered into a complete volume. But it bears no signature, as all the rest do, and in the earliest days it was known that Paul had not written it ; a knowledge which was never wholly lost in the Church of the West.

In an historical romance, *Silvanus the Christian*, Dr. E. A. Abbott tells how a young Roman nobleman, attending the lectures of Epictetus at the Greek university and by degrees losing his first satisfaction therein, happened upon a copy of some of Paul's epistles, and received a new direction of thought, a puzzled hope. From the epistles he made out vaguely who and what Paul might have been. Who Jesus, the Christ Jesus, was of Whom Paul spoke he knew not. His bookseller helped him somewhat and got him a Septuagint. He wrote of his new ideas to an uncle at Rome, who answered more fully than he expected. The uncle, too, had come across this religious novelty ; was half attracted by it as a thoughtful gentleman might be ; and was able to inform Silvanus that their elderly freedman, the librarian of the family, could enlighten him further. The freedman was in fact a Christian, and led onward by him and influenced by other persons and events Silvanus at last accepted the faith.

Perhaps the best way for one of us to-day to start upon a systematic study of the New Testament might be the way of Silvanus, from Paul as introduction, from his epistles as the earliest document. To start thus, with all the ignorance and all the serious yearning of Silvanus, would be strangely exciting.

Few are ignorant enough for that. But perhaps even among the readers of Every Man's histories there may be some who know little of the life, journeys, early education, and later experiences of S. Paul. Such readers would know the Gospels, would not have to learn Who Jesus the Christ was ; but they might find themselves pricked by a real curiosity about Paul and his relation to the apostolic Church ; and they would desire a plain commentary or companion to the letters. The Acts of the Apostles then comes to satisfy their need. Of course they will have read Acts or heard it read, but it will be a different kind of reading when it is undertaken with a purpose and therefore with a close attention. Freshness, the delight of freshness, is not impossible to students of that delightful book, the Odyssey of Christendom.

No reader will dispute its delightfulness. The exact student may possibly find himself doubting its perfect trustworthiness as history. We will not linger over that scruple now. Take Acts for Paul with the same large sympathy as you take the three first Gospels for the life and teaching of our Lord, and it will give you all that you require to make a start. You will have a frame and a map for the epistles.

Then having read the epistles and found a clue to them in Acts, turn back to the epistles. Read them through again, make an arrangement of them for yourself, according to time, place, and subjects. Draw out the main doctrines, and consider how these are related together and succeed one another logically. Try to enter into the mind and appreciate the character of S. Paul. Make a list of his friends, and try to understand their characters too. After a few weeks of such original diligence you will lose taste for little handbooks to New Testament literature : the New Testament itself will occupy your leisure more and more. And you will presently find far more use for the great classic books about it than you had been capable of before.

And you will want to go on, beyond the Pauline period. That vivid sense of To-day, of the immediate witness to a present state of things, will grow gradually faint. Read the First Epistle to the Corinthians with its answers to questions lately asked at Corinth ; 2 Corinthians, that outburst of affectionate happiness at the conclusion of a long quarrel, and the sacramental theology which flows out of the heart thus moved. Then turn to Colossians. Recognize indeed the same Paul writing here also to actual friends, but consider whether the immediate contact is as quick. A theology here again flows out of circumstances, but is it theology of the same kind as in Corinthians ?

When Corinthians was read the listeners listened eagerly to the 'things unseen which are eternal,' great thoughts in plain words. Did the household at Colossae listen with quite as universal an interest to the doctrine of the true *plêrôma* ? And when we pass from the warmth of the letter to the Colossians to the treatise entitled Ephesians, is not the passage more exactingly intellectual than the parallel movement from Galatians to Romans ?

And yet again : what of the Pastorals ? Are these from Paul ? We read a paragraph and say, Yes, certainly ; another and we feel a doubt ; and yet another and we almost confess that we hope it is not his. Dante's listener outside the church occurs to our musing heart, who hears the organ continuously and sometimes recognizes the voices of the singers, sometimes not.

S. Paul's death at the hand of Nero marked the close of an era in apostolic history. The kindly protection of the Roman Empire was past, the period of trial was ensuing, and was to inaugurate a deepening, a purifying, and an extension of the faith. Shadows were passing, substances taking form. The process of events is reflected in the waning literature around Paul. And the appended Epistle to the Hebrews supplies a connection. It is Pauline, but reminiscently. It belongs to the coming period rather than to the vanishing. Only the vital character at the centre abides throughout transition. In the phrase of the epistle itself : ‘ Jesus Christ the same : yesterday, to-day, and to the ages.’

# XI

## *ACTS*

ACTS is a continuation of the Gospel according to S. Luke ; dedicated to the same Theophilus ; written in the same plain scholar's Greek as the Gospel, carrying the history forward from the life and teaching, the passion, death, and resurrection of the Lord, to the start and expansion of the missionary Church, especially through the labours of S. Paul. The Ascension, in Judea, is the connecting event. The Gospel moves from Galilee to Jerusalem ; Acts from Jerusalem through Antioch and Ephesus to Rome. The Gospel is Galilean tinged with Western and European thought ; Acts is the influence thereof pervading the Hellenistic region.

The history falls into three main parts. (*A*) i–v Prelude : (*B*) vi–xi. 26 The Christian family in Jerusalem and the first beginnings of ordered worship and government : S. Peter, Stephen, Saul : (*C*) xi. 27–xxviii Paul, missionary enterprise, Antioch, Ephesus, Rome; the Church at Jerusalem under S. James and the apostles, the Gentile churches founded by S. Paul. This third part may be subdivided thus : (*C i*) xi–xiv Antioch and Galatia; (*C ii*) xv–xix. 20 Macedonia, Achaia, Ephesus ; (*C iii*) xix. 21–xxviii Jerusalem, Caesarea, Rome.

The goal is Rome. Rome reached, Jerusalem sinks below the horizon. Till then Jerusalem remains the

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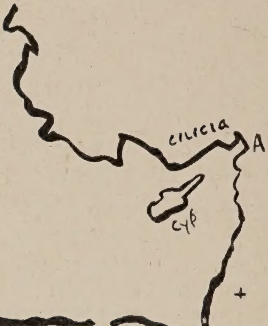
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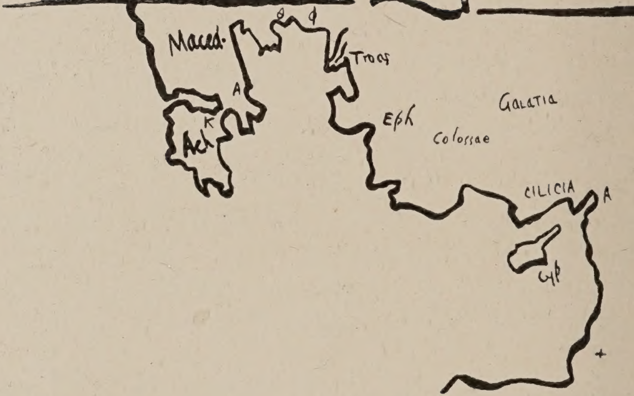
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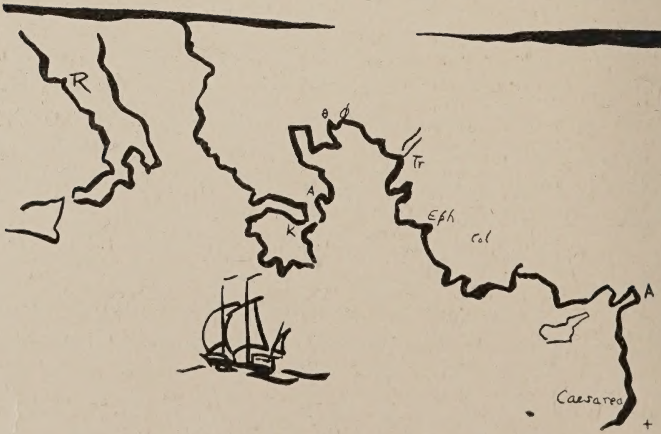
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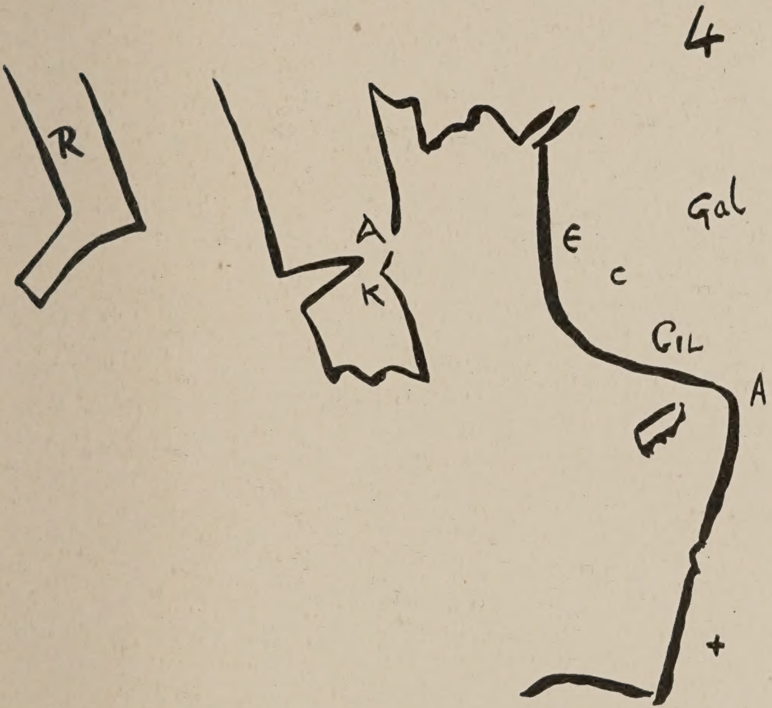


centre of the expanding circle, the venerable mother church.

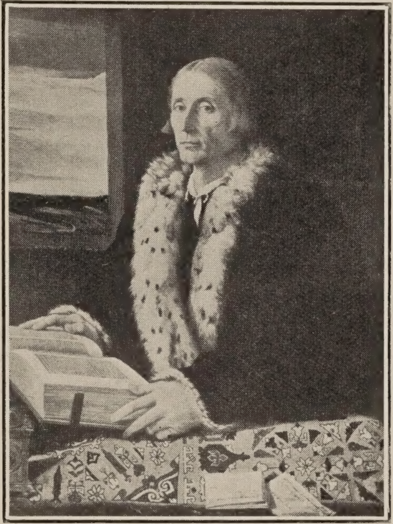
An imaginative reader will draw a map as he proceeds, beginning with the right-hand coastline (1) ; adding Troas, Macedonia, and Achaia for the second journey (2) ; then the western coast of Macedonia and Italy for the third journey and the voyage to Rome (3). The map may be a plan rather than a drawing (4) ; and initials may serve for names. The important thing is to do it for yourself, not to copy it, and to do it in stages.

You must also read the book through, in a single day if possible, for yourself, not critically but with enjoyment. Then write a sketch of the story as you remember it, never turning to the printed book to fill up or correct your impression, and leaving commentaries and introductions till all this personal holiday-task has been accomplished. A wise student will still postpone criticism and explanation till he has also read through S. Paul's epistles with a like directness for himself.

Then he is certain to be set musing. Does Acts agree with the epistles? Paul's early career—conversion, first missionary action and its consequences—are these consistently delineated in Acts xi–xv and in Philippians and Galatians? Then Paul's doctrine: is it the same in the epistles and in the sermons and colloquies in Acts? To find answer to these questions the student will seek aid from the greater books which have been written about Paul: Lightfoot's commentaries, Anderson Scott's *Christianity according to S. Paul*, Pfleiderer, Du Bose. But he will still think for himself, conversing with his authors, not simply acquiescing. The result for the simpler sort of students will most likely be, that broadly the epistles and Acts are consistent, but there are differences here and there and sometimes—as in the accounts of S. Paul's relations with the apostles at Jerusalem in Galatians and Acts—the discrepancy amounts to contradiction. And yet that is much like the inconsistencies which are still found in contemporary accounts of what happened within our own memory and it may be welcomed as guaranteeing honesty on both sides and documents ungarbled.

Yet, just as that generality may be, it leaves us at pains to form our own historical determination. Are we to follow Paul or Acts, or strike a mean, selecting from both, correcting, harmonizing ?

The rough and ready rule in such cases is to give credit to the more immediate witness, to the letter-writer telling about himself rather than to the historian collecting evidence about other persons ; to the earlier of the documents rather than to the later. But this is only a rough and ready rule. Those who care about such scruples will soon perceive that they cannot ask such questions unless they are prepared to think, to think critically, for themselves, with some delicacy and patience. Delicacy means that nicety of judgement which is attained by constant exercise in various fields ; in general literature where the habits of expression are observed ; in large acquaintance with history which shows how men have thought and acted very variously according to the various ages and movements in which they lived ; in the ways of the world and in the common and yet original qualities of human nature ; in ethics which compels or forbids acceptance of some well-attested statements. It would be no ill preparation for a plain man's biblical criticism to read in Grote's *History of Greece* his narrative of Xerxes' invasion and his critical



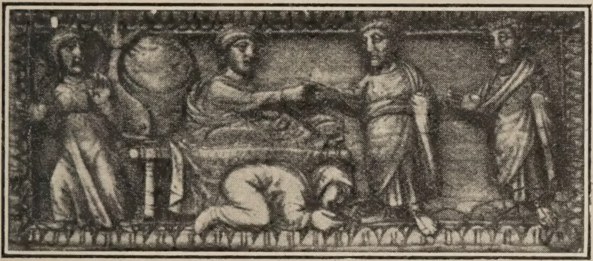
'S. Luke.'

comparisons of Aeschylus, Herodotus, and the later authorities from whom he has to construct the story. There is a masculine breadth about his handling which biblical critics are apt to miss while they aim at a higher certainty. However—Every Man will good-naturedly object that he has other things to do: he cannot pursue those extended lines of study. Let us break off with two pregnant remarks of Sir Joshua Reynolds: 'Study consists in learning to see nature, and may be called the art of using other men's minds. . . . However, this pursuit, or indeed any similar pursuit, prevents the artist from being tired of his art.'

One obvious question must be asked and if possible answered. Is Acts later than Paul? We are obliged to consider who wrote Acts and when.

Surely the same person who wrote the third Gospel which, like Acts, is dedicated to Theophilus and is referred to in Acts as 'the former treatise.' Early tradition says this person was Luke, the companion of whom Paul speaks more than once in his epistles, whom he calls 'the beloved physician' and who alone was with him in those last days which seem to be described in 2 Timothy. But Acts breaks off with a two years' captivity at Rome from which Paul must have been released if the Pastorals are to be connected with his career, and from which Philippians leads us to suppose he was released. Why should this companion, who was with Paul to the last, have broken off his history so soon? The critic from the school of Grote will be content to answer: We do not know, but is not 'The Gospel brought at last to Rome' a proper conclusion to a history of Christian origins?

But there is another point. We have no reason to suppose Luke the author of Acts or Gospel except that tradition says so : the name is not attached to the documents, for the title ‘ according to Luke ’ is but one form of a variously formed appendage to the main text. But there is nothing in the history as it stands narrated to prevent acceptance of the title and tradition : Gospel and Acts might very well have been written by a companion of S. Paul. Yet there is a stumbling block. No inference, but an indisputable fact, proves part of Acts to have been written by a companion of S. Paul, for parts of the narrative are written in the first person ; *we* (came, went, etc.) takes the place of the generally used *he* or *they*. Closer examination suggests a reason for this. The first person enters with Paul's passage from Asia Minor to Macedonia and leaves the narrative at Philippi. When Paul passes through Macedonia on his last journey it (or he) enters again and continues wherever travelling is described, to the conclusion of the travelling and the arrival at Rome. The plain inference is that the author of the whole book tells his story in the most direct fashion and uses ‘ we ’ whenever he was himself present.



THE RAISING OF TABITHA.
From a Carved Ivory Panel, about the fourth century.

In Macedonia he seems to have been at home and for part of the time he stayed there, and that personal absence he marks by not writing ‘ we.’

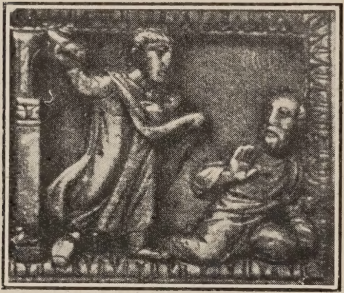
That satisfies an unsuspicious mind. But is it trusty satisfaction ? What if S. Paul’s companion wrote these travel notes alone ; then from his diary a later historian extracted from them for his elaborated work, ‘ The History of the Galilean and Pauline Age ’ ? As in the Gospel, so in Acts have we but a retrospect of persons, events, ideas, belonging to a past generation ? There is little that can be adduced in proof of this. The language of the travel-document is not different from the rest of the book in any noticeable manner. The opening chapters about the primitive Church in Jerusalem show a far more peculiar colour of their own. And therein, urge the analysers, our critical opinion is confirmed : the book as a whole is a scholarly collection from older material, a church History, not an apostolic witness.

A critical opinion : surely nothing more : the facts for proof are meagre.

But if these questions have once been asked, a delicate and patient criticism is importunate for admission. The influence which really touches judgement is gradually and vaguely derived from the sense of later church life, later theological habit, which really does grow upon many readers. And those are most affected by this influence who have brooded long upon the New Testament and have received therefrom into their imagination an idea of growth, of development. Each particular instance quoted in argument may be countered, as when the apostles are sent to Samaria to lay hands on the newly-baptized converts, and to mediate the gift of the Spirit to them, and this is put forward as the rite of confirmation, and then explained on the other side as but the unpremeditated germ from which the rite was afterwards regulated. Such argument and counter-argument is not the governing force. The book as a whole steals upon the whole mind of some of its readers as issuing from a decade later than S. Paul. And vague though that may seem to the readers who do not feel it, and unwarranted though an obstinate assertion would be from those who do, yet those who do are often those who read most assiduously, and (it must be added) to whom the book is most impressive as theology.

To that quality the serious lovers of the book will give especial heed. Acts is not Pauline : and the Paul who speaks and is delineated in Acts is not quite the Paul of the epistles. At least there is a difference as marked as the difference between Paul of Romans and Paul of the Pastorals. The theology of S. Paul is (as will be shown in another chapter) peculiarly his own. It left indelible mark upon the creed and worship of the later apostolic Church as well as upon subsequent ages. But its intensity was never quite assimilated. The storm and stress in which it was evolved passed into other kinds of trial, while the special controversies which vivified his own period quieted into compromise or reconciliation.

There is a tone throughout Acts which is not the tone of S. Paul : and it accompanies all that is done or said in the history. For a while the reader is content to recognize the impartial layman presenting his fiery ecclesiastical and mystical chief according to his own simpler appreciation of these deep matters. But that mood will hardly last. An opinion, which almost grows into a conviction, supervenes at last that one is writing here from out a period of Roman persecution, looking back on the golden age when the empire was the fair-dealing friend of the Christian missionary. In his day Jew and Gentile, and especially Jewish and Gentile Christianity, are no longer ranged in present conflict one against the other with the issue still in the balance. That rivalry has been abolished by a pathetic failure of the Jewish forces. The year 70 is past, Jerusalem is fallen. And this writer, historian through and through, traces the causes, passions, and sequence of events which led to this conclusion, and idealizes Jerusalem. His own times are not settled and undisturbed, but he is a churchman in a Church which is already one, holy, and apostolic, a unity and home for all Christians throughout the world with ordered liturgy and sacramental comfort. He has the serenity of a churchman, and being a historian he is interested in tracing the origins of the institutional religion that surrounds and gladdens him. He gathers material from many sources, his opening chapters from the child-like stories of the older folk who remember the first days in Jerusalem, or remember their fathers telling their stories of those days ; the days of miracles, of fiery tongues and guardian angels and prayer with visible and audible signs of the Holy Spirit's presence. And he wonders about miracle, that phenomenon which, when he writes, no longer happens. And being historian, he does not explain, speculate, or rationalize, but tells the


The Stoning of S. Paul.

From a Carved Ivory Panel, about the fourth century.

tales as he heard them, yet with just such refinement as may reflect his own reverent musings.

His chief treasure was his predecessor's—Luke's ?—diary. There he read of the voyage and shipwreck, read how Paul spoke, acted, dominated men. There he caught some vision of the things not seen but eternal, and of that devotion to Jesus Christ, the object of that more equable worship of the great Church, which gave Paul his enduring and cheerful courage. Thence, and sometimes too from other written notes and conversations collected by his diligence, he picked up phrases of unfamiliar primitive piety—God purchasing the Church by His own blood ; the Spirit of Jesus forbidding. It is a church historian's retrospective view, out of the years of fresh trial which followed the fall of Jerusalem, upon the heroic years which followed the Ascension and the descent of the Holy Spirit. It is a careful work of scholarship, but inspired with some warmer breath of the divine Spirit than was the average experience of the faithful : and that special inspiration was mediated by the treasure-trove of the diary of S. Paul's companion and the illumination thereby thrown on the character of S. Paul as the clue to the progress of the history.

Such is the idea of this book of the Acts which captivates some readers after repeated reading and prolonged consideration of the rich enjoyment afforded thereby. No simpler idea satisfies them. To accept Luke as wholly and merely author, to seek unquestionable facts from a supposed contemporary pen, to lose the full proportion of perspective, would be to them a misfortune ; and they are persuaded that good reason averts the misfortune. The gain is compensated by a sacrifice, viz. of trust in the complete accuracy of detailed narrative. But the sacrifice is made somewhat lightly, since no critical theory may easily justify such a bold trust as that. And as a generally useful sketch for the arrangement and interpretation of S. Paul's letters this history with its artistic inspiration serves as trustworthily as would the note-book of the contemporary diarist.

# XII

## *PAUL THE TRAVELLER—ANTIOCH AND GENTILES*

SAINT Paul, telling of his early life, declares how he might pride himself on his descent and privileges :

> circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews ; as touching the law, a Pharisee ; as touching zeal, persecuting the Church ; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless.

But he continues :

> Howbeit what things were gain to me these I have counted loss for Christ. Yea, verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord : for Whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, righteousness which is of God by faith : that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death ; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead.

Here is a note of autobiography. An ardent Jewish churchman, a strict Pharisee, tells how he was converted to Christianity, and declares his creed. The creed is his Pharisaic creed—God, the Christ or Messiah, the Resurrection ; but that creed is completed by acknowledgement of Jesus his Lord as the Christ ; and by the warmth of a new life and a passionate devotion, which has burnt away all pride of self, all indeed that could be reckoned

The Damascus Gate of Jerusalem.

as self, and fused him into a vital unity with this Christ Jesus his Lord.

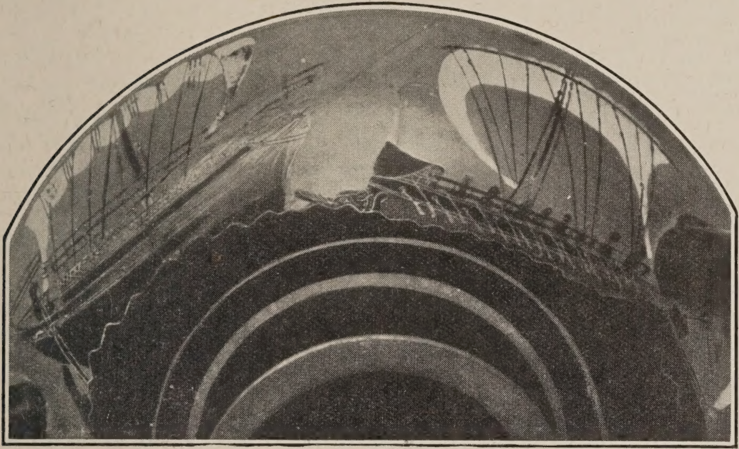
All this is from a letter sent from captivity at Rome to the Christians at Philippi. From Acts a secondary filling up of the allusive testimony of this primary document may be had. In Acts there are three accounts of Paul's conversion. One is the historian's narrative, two are speeches of Paul, to the Jews at Jerusalem, and at Caesarea to the Herodian king Agrippa and the Roman governor. From these we learn that he was a citizen of Tarsus (and as a freeborn citizen of the empire he evidently belonged to a respectable family in Tarsus) ; that he was a pupil of the Rabbi Gamaliel ; and that he witnessed the martyrdom of S. Stephen, and heard therefore Stephen's forgiveness of his murderers and his cry that he saw the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. Then follows his commission from the high priest against the Christians ; the overwhelming light and voice from heaven—' I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest ' —as he rode to Damascus ; his abasement, blindness, baptism ; after that an interval, with a period of meditation in Arabia ; at last his introduction by Barnabas to the Christians at Antioch ; and his commission (by laying on of hands and the command of the Holy Spirit) to go forth on a missionary journey with Barnabas.

The nephew of Barnabas, John Mark, a young Christian of a Jerusalem family, and (as is generally supposed) our evangelist, accompanied the ' apostles ' or ' missionaries.' In Cyprus, where a notable conversion was effected, Paul seems to have abandoned his old Jewish name Saul. Thence he went into the southern coast-district of Asia Minor, a strip of land with Greco-Asiatic cities which had rather lately been joined to the ancient Celtic kingdom of Galatia in the north to form the Roman province of Galatia. Starting in the synagogues, repelled by the Jews therein, Paul turned to the Gentiles, crossing the Rubicon of church history, and crossing with that sudden blaze of temper which, so attractively, recurs in him. Churches were founded amid enthusiasm and peril; and on the return journey were ‘confirmed.’ So the missionaries came home again to Antioch and were welcomed with joy and thanksgiving.

But this was interrupted. The old orthodox Jewish Christians of Jerusalem objected to entrance being opened to the Church except by way of the Law: for Gentiles, uncircumcised, undisciplined, there was no place. What happened next will perhaps be for ever obscure. Acts tells a plain tale. Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem. S. James called a meeting, a ‘council’ of apostles, brethren, and elders. Paul and Barnabas gave an account of their mission and success. S. Peter spoke on their side. The apostles were strong enough to allay the dissension, and S. James pronounced a charitable if compromising and, as far as evidence can be drawn from later references to the problem, an impracticable decision:

> The apostles and elder brethren unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting; Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment; it seemed good unto us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you these things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.

And the missionaries with their companions returned happily to Antioch.



Greek Ships of S. Paul's time.

But in the Epistle to the Galatians S. Paul gives a very different account of what seems almost certainly the same affair. He tells of his early orthodoxy and zeal and persecution of the Christians ; and of his conversion :

> But when it was the good pleasure of God, Who separated me, even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles ; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood : neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me : but I went away into Arabia ; and again I returned unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none save James the Lord's brother. Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold before God I lie not. Then I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. And I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ : but they only heard say, He that once persecuted now preacheth the faith of which he once made havock ; and they glorified God in me.
>
> Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. And I went up by revela-

> tion; and I laid before them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately before them that were of repute, lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain. But not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. . . . But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person)—they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me; but contrariwise when they saw that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision . . . and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision; only they would that we should remember the poor; which very thing I was also zealous to do.

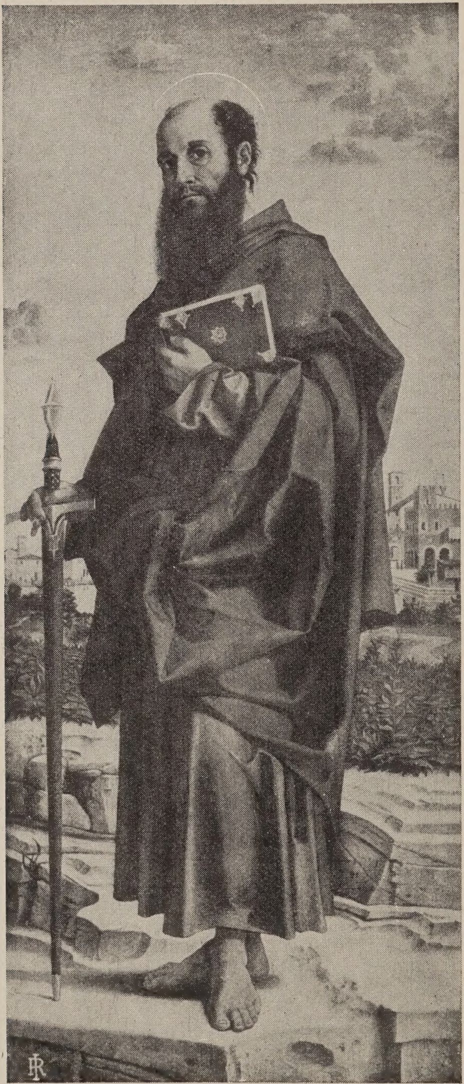
Some place Galatians earliest of the extant letters of S. Paul; written before the council was held at Jerusalem; and therefore (whatever the visits may have been which are mentioned in it) that visit is not alluded to; no contradiction has to be explained away.

But though doubt be allowed concerning the address (North or South Galatia) and date of the letter, that extremely early date is quite improbable. And Paul writes as though he were specially referring to the so-called council, correcting inaccurate accounts which had become current. The lengthy notes about Titus are to be noticed. Neither here nor earlier in the narrative does Acts mention Titus. But Timothy is mentioned on Paul's second visit to the Cilician churches—this time with Silas; and the same problem of Greek or half-Greek birth is the point of the note. Does this indicate a certain confusion in the later tradition or traditions from which the author of Acts had to construct his history? If so, may there not be larger inaccuracy? May not that inaccuracy have begun quite soon, so that Paul was obliged himself to protest against it? And, if Acts were composed when and how we have conjectured a few pages back, is not this just the kind of imperfection in detail which might be expected ? Rather a large detail certainly. A necessity is involved of eschewing the 'Council of Jerusalem' as illustrating organization in the Jerusalem and early apostolic ministry. But is it not necessary to consider whether that laudable desire can be satisfied ; and to confess that the desire itself is no confirmation of historical evidence ? And if clung to must it not bring in its train a very serious judgement ? Unless the improbably early date of Galatians be adopted S. Paul contradicts the tradition preserved in Acts. What then is to be thought about S. Paul ? 'Before God I lie not,' he says. And we certainly believe that asseveration : he believes that he is giving the true account. But if Acts be right, Paul is mistaken : his memory is clouded.

S. Paul was a saint of reverie and vision. That creed of his at which he glanced but just now, that self-obliterating real union with Christ, is beyond average experience, but it is the essential fact in Pauline experience. Nowhere is it so sublimely described as in this Epistle to the Galatians :

> I have been crucified with Christ ; yet I live ; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me : and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Throughout the epistle Paul is contending for spirit against flesh. In the introductory chapter he is contending for revelation against instruction, inward and divine truth against the talk of men. Perhaps a memory so exalted might let all the public business of that council day go by. He paid no attention to it at the time. The decision was communicated to him in another mode and



S. Paul.

in other terms. I have referred to Grote as a model of criticism. Now and again in his austere work he lets appear something within his soul which links it with the enthusiasm of S. Paul. He has to decide in one place between a statement about the defeat and retreat of Xerxes made by Aeschylus who fought in that struggle and the discordant statement of Herodotus who wrote about it later as a mere historian. He decides in favour of Herodotus. For (writes Mr. Grote) :

> The Athenian auditors of the Persae would not criticize nicely the historical credibility of that which Aeschylus told them about the sufferings of their retreating foe, nor his geographical credibility when he placed Mount Pangaeus on the

> hither side of the Strymon to persons marching out of Greece. But I must confess that, to my mind, his whole narrative bears the stamp of the poet and the religious man, not of the historical witness. And my confidence in Herodotus is increased when I compare him in this matter with Aeschylus—as well in what he says as in what he does not say.

The parallel is rough, but not impertinent. However, Paul telling with clear memory what really happened; the historian constructing a narrative from various documents and hearsay, later, with the ecclesiastical custom of his own day colouring his views : that surely is the reasonable explanation of the facts we have in our hands to-day.

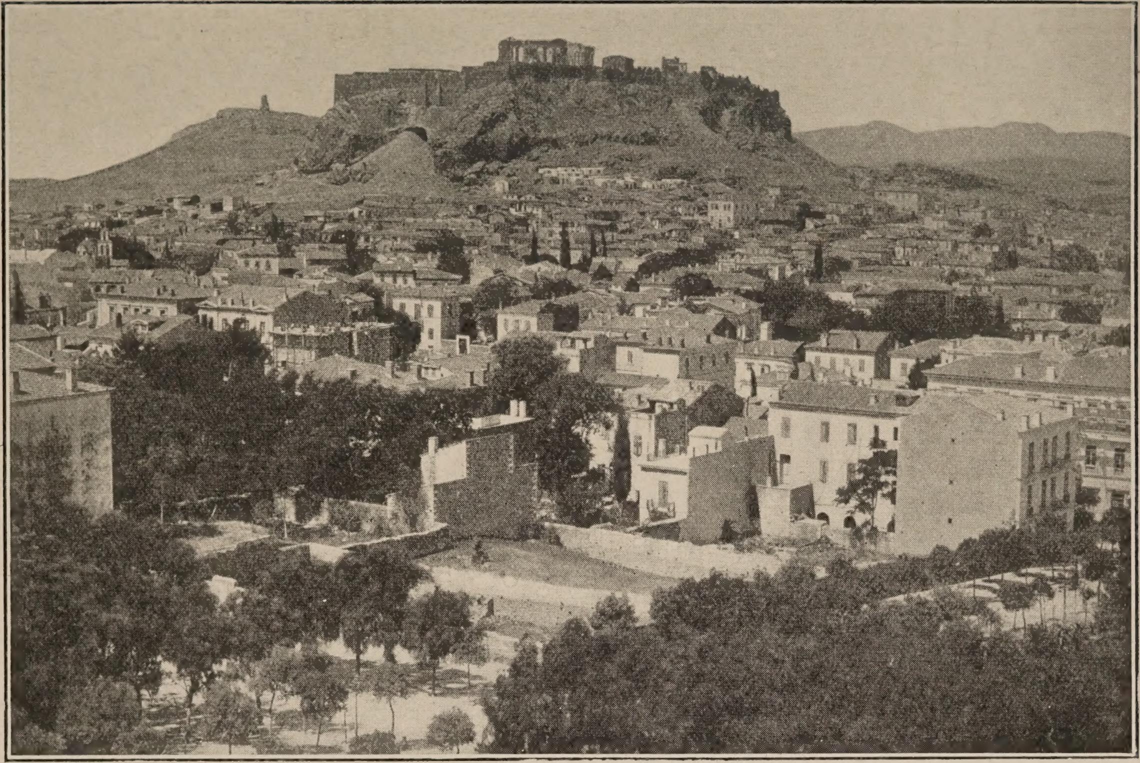
And perhaps we may after all take the problem more easily. Suppose that the narrative in Acts is on the whole correct. James called a council and it met and passed a decree. But Paul did not attend the meeting and paid but slight attention to the decree. He had already inspired the Galilean apostles with his revelation and knew they trusted him.

## XIII

## *ATHENS AND CORINTH*

HAVING returned to Antioch, Paul started on his travels again, visiting the churches he and Barnabas had established in Pamphylia and Cilicia. A dispute with Barnabas about John Mark, whom Paul refused to take with him after his defection in the earlier expedition, parted the friends, and Silas went with Paul. We take leave of Barnabas regretfully. He had discerned Paul's worth and brought him to Antioch when he still lay under suspicion as the erewhile persecutor. He was a good man, as the author of Acts writes, and the title comes back to memory when we read in Paul's letter to the Romans : ' For a good man perhaps one might even dare to die.' However, they parted. The churches were visited and confirmed. And Paul and Silas proposed to extend their journey into the northern parts of Asia Minor. But ' the Spirit of Jesus ' allowed not, and impelled them westward to Troas where in vision Paul heard a Macedonian calling them to ' come over to Macedonia and help us.' So they crossed the strait and entered Europe.

At Philippi they had success with hardship, were imprisoned, strangely delivered, and released. Not strangely, but characteristically, Paul's quick and aristocratic temper blazed up in the process of release : ' They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, Roman citizens, and have cast us into prison ; and do they now cast us out



ATHENS.

privily ? Nay verily ; but let them come themselves and bring us out.' The other side of that proud temper had appeared in his cheerful encouragement of the other prisoners and his tenderness toward the jailer.

From Philippi, through Thessalonica they came to Athens, where men were ever desirous of new notions, or as Paul puts it, 'susceptible to religious impressions.' And to these Athenians he made what seems (from the short summary in Acts) to have been one of his most remarkable sermons. He spoke sympathetically, not pretending to learning nor condescending to commonplace. And at the close he gave them news indeed : 'The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked ; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent : inasmuch as He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom He hath ordained ; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.'

At the resurrection some mocked, some mused. One woman and Dionysius the Areopagite—a shadowy light in ecclesiastical legend afterwards—were the only adherents gained. But 'God has prepared good works for us to walk in,' not to finish. So Paul wrote presently to the Ephesians, knowing that success is not a churchman's word. Doubtless he left Athens in happy frame.

Thence, beyond the isthmus into Achaia or Southern Greece, to Corinth. There he stayed a year and a half making impression but suffering rebuff. Well might it be so in that busy city of pleasure, merchandise, and motley population. The Roman magistrate was cynical. The Jews were hostile and dangerous. A Christian church of marked Gentile character was gathered ; and towards the church in Corinth Paul was long afterwards bound by closest ties of both disappointed and victorious affection. To the Corinthians he wrote in a letter of passionate love, deep sacramental insight, stern warning, ‘ If I love you more abundantly, am I loved the less ? But be it so : I will gladly spend and be spent for your souls.’

We have earlier letters than those to Corinth. From Corinth, or Athens, Paul wrote two letters to the Thessalonians, from whom he received news by Timothy. The Thessalonians were proving the difficulty of their new life. They had to endure almost a persecution. Paul encouraged them. Charity, large hope, blends with a fierceness towards the obstinate enemies of God which stamps the letters as early in his ever-growing faith. The Thessalonians had also asked a question which betrays the early crudeness of a glorious Gospel. Jesus the Lord will come as the triumphant Christ. How soon ? Already some of the expectant saints are dying. What of these ? Will death hinder their hoped exaltation ? S. Paul answers according to his converts’ simplicity. He assures them of the equal hope for quick and dead at the great day, and he pictures its wonders in the scenery of Jewish tradition, only with a pure brevity which is a notable contrast to the grotesque apocalypses outside the Jewish Bible, and even to the bizarreries that are interspersed with grandeur in Daniel :

> We would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep ; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, which have no hope. For if ye believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them that are fallen asleep through Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of

CORINTH.

God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Frank symbol: unhesitating assurance. As we follow S. Paul in his onward journey, the inward and the outward movement, we shall find symbol vanishing but assurance becoming more and more reasonable and practical. In 1 Corinthians he treats the same subject picturesquely still, but almost philosophically and in close connection with that warm and elaborated doctrine of charity which proceeds so magnificently through the epistle. In 2 Corinthians and in Philippians he touches the problem again ; ever holding more firmly to this world's kindly duties as he soars more securely into the higher heaven. In Ephesians the immediate Advent is left in the background of memory and a long vista opens of progress for mankind through the ministry of the Church—

> till we all attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto one fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

And already to the Thessalonians Paul has counsels, or rather commands, for quiet service, no soothsayer's curiosity, but patient trust and daily duty :

> Concerning times and seasons ye have no need that aught be written . . . the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night . . . ye brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief . . . watch and be sober . . . admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering towards all—Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in all ways.

From Corinth Paul crossed the sea again, visited Jerusalem, Antioch, and his first churches. Then settled at Ephesus, the second centre of missionary Christianity after Antioch, Jerusalem the Mother of all never having shown any ardour of missionary enterprise.

# XIV

## *EPHESUS*

FROM Corinth S. Paul went to Ephesus. And after circling among old friends in diverse regions he settled in Ephesus where he was destined to do steady work, with exciting interruptions. First, affairs at Corinth claimed attention. Questions of faith and order were submitted to him ; and news reached him also of very unsubmissive controversy.

Party spirit broke bounds. ‘ Heresies,’ as Paul called them, arose. Some were for Paul, some for Kephas, i.e. S. Peter, some for Apollos, a well-read and eloquent Hellenist who had fallen in with Paul’s friends Priscilla and Aquila at Ephesus and then gone to Corinth. His position affords a side light on more than one or two half-hidden interests in early church life. He had known only ‘ the baptism of John,’ and Priscilla and Aquila ‘ took him unto them and expounded unto him the way of God more carefully.’ Soon after, Paul himself found other disciples who had been baptized ‘ into John’s baptism,’ and had not so much as heard of the Holy Ghost being given at conversion. These Paul baptized ‘ into the Name of the Lord Jesus.’

There was an offence of immorality, of incest, at Corinth, and the Corinthian Church would not correct it. S. Paul’s action was prompt and sharp. He has sent

Timothy. He means to come himself. He will deal with their ‘ puffed-up ’ obstinacy.

> What will ye ? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of meekness ? . . . I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged him that hath done this thing, in the Name of our Lord Jesus, ye being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Such is the primitive excommunication : expulsion from the shelter of the Christian family into the isolation, destitution, and moral temptation of a world renounced and hostile, this present world where Satan is prince ; but, as result, salvation in the day of eternity.

This is love, not cruelty. But it is not lyric, it is the heroic Gospel love, such as will burn a way through evil. But it is the new love with the new name, *agapê*, which Jesus Christ planted in the heart of man. ‘ Love God ; and your neighbour as yourself : there is Law and Prophets : a new commandment give I unto you, that ye should love even as I have loved you : greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends : ye are My friends, if ye do the things that I command you.’ Thus our Lord in S. John.

For S. Paul *agapê* is the essence of all theology. *Agapê* was a word of soberest content in ordinary Greek. The Christians, scarcely at all indebted to their Greek Bible (the Septuagint Old Testament) for the transformation, took it to describe their sober, practical piety of every day, and the heroic endurance with passionate sacrifice of the Cross—the example of their Lord, their imitation, and the union with Him thereby : ‘ I am crucified with Christ : with His life now I live.’ What the Nicene Creed in the fourth century expresses by the term 'substance' the apostolic Church felt through S. Paul and knew through S. John as *agapê*. *Agapê* is the key to all the questions asked and answered in 1 Corinthians. Are the faithful to eat the meat at dinner parties in a Greek city where it was generally certain that this meat had been 'offered to idols,' since the slaughter of animals was always a sacrificial act in the pagan world? The mere scruple might easily be ignored, says S. Paul (quite oblivious of the decree of S. James's council), but some tender consciences are troubled by it. 'So through thy knowledge he that is weak perisheth, the brother for whom Christ died. . . . If meat maketh my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh for evermore.'

Then the institutional *agapê*, the fraternal meal, at which you partake together of the one loaf and the one cup—you disturb the friendliness of this festival by jealousies of rich and poor, even by the greediness of the rich who ought to share their contribution generously, lovingly. But far more is involved. This loaf, this cup, are the sacrament of the death of our Lord, the pledge of His longed-for advent. Herein you are all united in one body, consubstantial, with Him. Your pettinesses, thus associated, are awful and fatal irreverence. Your sincerity would be life, love, loyalty.

> For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and said, This is My Body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of Me. In like manner also the cup after Supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My Blood: this do as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come.

Did our Lord say anything about a ceremonial repe-

EPHESUS.

tition of the Last Supper? Except in the later addition to the text of S. Luke, borrowed as that seems from S. Paul, the Gospels do not indicate it. Does S. Paul borrow from Greco-Asiatic sacramental religion in his doctrine and ritual? It may be so, but these are not the really important questions. S. Paul did not confound the Gospel with pagan elements, but he felt the yearning and recognized divine premonitions in the pagan soul, and took these, and in hallowing these gave larger expression even to the Gospel truth. His originality is in his vital handling of the Galilean tradition. All this to him is *agapê*, the transubstantiation of daily intercourse and sacred memory and fervent hope and ethics and human tragedy into quietness, peace, and love.

And so, after further directions about devotional exercises, on the same principle of no selfishness, no pride, he passes into the famous hymn of *agapê*, charity; the ‘ more excellent way ’ :

> If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. . . . Love suffereth long and is kind . . . is not provoked, taketh not account of evil . . . rejoiceth with the truth ; believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. . . . We know in part, and we prophesy in part : but when that which is perfect is come that which is in part shall be done away . . . for now we see in a mirror darkly ; but then face to face : now I know in part ; but then I shall know even as I have been known.

‘ In a mirror, darkly, in riddles ’—but love is that ‘ strange dash into reality ’ which need not wait for any ‘ then ’ in time, and in which absolute reason completes logic. Now and again S. Paul makes a show of ingenious but unsatisfying logic : he has the orator’s delight in word and phrase and forms of art. But he expresses conviction in those outbursts of *O altitudo !* which punctuate his discourse and are the sign-manual of his genuine letters.

Thus punctuating then he proceeds to his eminent concluding subject, the resurrection. He begins with a creed, and the force of it is *agapê*, a passionate gratitude for an immeasurable sacrifice. ‘ Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved. . . . How that Christ died for our sins . . . and was buried . . . and hath been raised . . . according to the Scriptures on the third day ’ ; which creed he proceeds to confirm.

As a Pharisee he had already believed in the resurrection, that the faithful shall rise from the dead at the day of the Lord, the advent of the kingdom. Many Greeks and Gentiles hoped for some large life of immortalized man : and most of the Gentile Christians knew the Bible and Messianic ‘ scriptures.’ But Paul says : In the Man Jesus Christ our Lord this destiny of mankind has been seen, is known, already consummated. We confess that when we confess Him to be the Christ. If you deny His Resurrection on the third day, you must surrender your ancient hope for man. He establishes the Church’s faith in the Lord’s Resurrection, first by the record of His appearances. These he maintains are sufficiently attested. But who that reads Paul copiously and intimately will doubt that his own faith rests on the kind of ‘ appearance ’ he himself has seen ? ‘ I have been crucified with Christ . . . He liveth in me.’

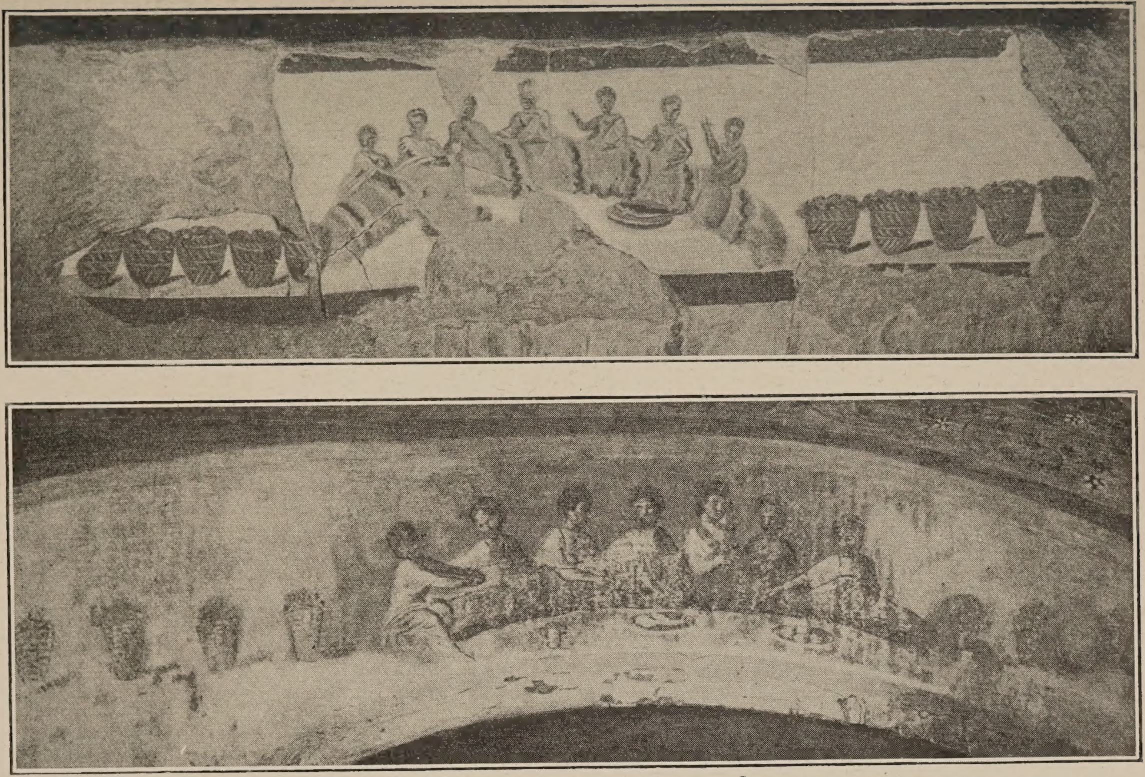
This is no denial of the resurrection of the body. For Paul understands not ‘flesh and blood’ by ‘body.’ When he ‘ believed ’ he ‘ received the Spirit ’ : henceforth all events and persons have been spiritual to him.

So, by that illumination, he perceives the union of Christ with all men in the one resurrection of the body which can be separated into no diversity of kinds, though there are two aspects—Christ complete, they that are Christ’s in process of completion. Paul employs analogy, the seed sown, dying, renewing itself in a body of another kind. If the sowing represented the burying of a dead body in the grave this analogy would be inaccurate, and at all events it would not explain what a large view of S. Paul’s whole writings proves him to have believed. The seed is sown when a man is born into this visible world. He enters with a visible, tangible body ; material is our modern term ; the Hebrews called it ‘ flesh and blood ’ ; and S. Paul roundly states that this body does not inherit the kingdom of God, does not partake of the resurrection he is concerned about. And indeed it is obvious that this material body wears out, dies, decays ; unless an authoritative revelation compelled our reason to submit, we would not expect its decomposed elements to re-form into the body which had been. And no such revelation can be quoted : and S. Paul says the body which shall be is a different kind of body, spiritual. Study Paul carefully and you will probably allow that spiritual to him always implies ‘ moral.’

A man is sown into visible life with a visible material body which dies utterly. But he has also the germ of spirit, character, the moral life of each person. Feeble at first, perverse for a while, yet this character may grow. While the old ‘ man ’ decays, the new ‘ man ’ develops. ‘ The first man is of the earth earthy ; the second man is of heaven.’ So runs the pure apostolic text in 1 Corinthians xv. 47. The later text was corrupted into ‘ the second man is the Lord from heaven,’ seemingly easier to understand, but well considered that reading separates Christ from men and abolishes our ground of hope.

This explanation rests on inference from many phrases and sentences throughout Paul's epistles early and later. He never defines the spiritual body, but whenever he uses the kindred metaphor of ‘ clothing,’ ‘ building,’ ‘ growing,’ it seems plain that he is thinking of the same mystery. And always he indicates moral character, the inner man which is the real man, and which may become permanent, perfect, eternal. The very essence of the Christian vocation is in this growth of the real man. The gift of the Spirit is one aspect of the grace-given capacity for such growth. So in Ephesians :

> No longer walk as the Gentiles walk in vanity (or emptiness) of their mind, alienated from the life of God. . . . Ye did not so learn



Christian Communion in the Second Century.

> Christ . . . that ye put away the old man which waxeth corrupt . . . and that ye be renewed in the Spirit of your mind, and put on the new man which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

Another aspect of this new power supplied to faithful men is seen in Paul's conception of the Body of Christ, as the community of all His people who are so absolutely joined to Him as to make ' one man,' one person. If He rose, they rise : if He was perfect, so may they be, not of their own precarious merit but of His effective influence. His power becomes effective in men when they trust it, turn from doubt about forgiveness or their own strength, and believing that in Him they can, prove the promise by acting.

Yet this is growth, not finishing. With us the mysterious condition of time and environment involves a change that cannot be described ; ' in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.' How far has Paul advanced in this letter to the clever Corinthians upon the simplicity with which he wrote to the humbler Thessalonians. ' For the trumpet shall sound.' Ah, yes ! The old traditional imagery is true ' as in a mirror and a riddle ' : but it means more :

> The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying which is written, Death is swallowed up in victory . . .

And so Paul marches through his final *O altitudo !* to the quietness, peace, and love of the serviceable churchman :

> Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

There was more trouble with Corinth and worse. Another monstrosity of sin was reported. Paul's orders for its discipline were disobeyed. The Corinthians treated him with pitiful ingratitude. He wrote a severe letter, lost to us unless, as some improbably suppose, the latter part of our 2 Corinthians be it. He sent Titus, that strong man whom he seems not once or twice to have summoned for aid in emergency. And Titus did not fail. No longer able to bear uncertainty Paul himself started for Corinth, but met Titus returning with good news. The quarrel was over. Submission was made. All was well.

Then Paul wrote 2 Corinthians, the third or fourth letter of the actual series. He had really nothing to say except how glad he was, how thankful to God, how much he loves his friends. But out of such happy commonplace he educes deeper theology than any we have yet read from him. This is the sacramental epistle : not directions for the conduct of an institutional sacrament as in 1 Corinthians, but a large, profound, unpremeditated exposition of the sacramental principle in all history.

> Wherefore we faint not ; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory ; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are temporal ; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

'Paul, apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, and Timothy our brother which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in the whole of Achaia : grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.' So the letter opens on the formal lines of all the earlier epistles ; insistence on apostleship, divine, invisible vocation ; the one Church, of God not Christ, of all ages and of all nations ; brothers, saints, all—the great heart expands beyond the apostle's authority ; the terse and serene creed.

Glass Vessel of the kind used for Chalices in the early Church.

Then blessing and thanksgiving, with retrospect of all the recent sorrow. What agony of mind, what comfort of God. And the comfort was there all the time if only he had looked deep enough. So is it always ; in all changes and chances; real glory at the core of humiliation, real life emerging from mortal decay. He glances at the hardships of the apostolic career : hardships and perils, and what oppressed himself every day, the care of all those troublesome churches. But—a treasure in earthen vessels—the saints are his dear friends and the apostolic office is the embassy of the Saviour :

> We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were intreating by us : we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. Him Who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf ; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Within the commonplace and the disgrace—mystery : the bitter cross, the petty ways of men—salvation and a foretaste of holiness. That is the spirit within the transitory flesh, the unique Spirit using and transforming His instrument. Paul resolves never to think of Jesus his Master or of capricious, affectionate converts except in this trustful happiness.

> The love of Christ constrains us . . . wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh : even if we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more. Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature : the old things are passed away ; behold they are become new.

He breaks off to talk about the collection for the poor saints—probably the churches in Judea. Corinth had promised contribution. Paul had told the Macedonians how liberally Corinth would contribute. The recent disturbances have hindered this. Now he is anxious, or half anxious. It is almost amusing to observe the difficulty Paul finds in supposing people may be mean with money. It warms the heart to admire his own careless generosity. The only saying of the Lord's he ever quotes is an otherwise unrecorded saying : 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' And here he magnifies and beautifies the privilege:

> Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might become rich. . . . Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart. . . . God loveth a cheerful giver, and God is able to make all grace abound unto you ; that ye having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work.

That is a somewhat uncommon description of grace ; and the passage closes with another piece of theology, thoughtful, genial, characteristic of this epistle:

> . . . ye being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God. For the ministration of this service not only filleth up the measure of the wants of the saints, but aboundeth also through many thanksgivings unto God ; seeing that through the

> proving of you by this ministration they glorify God for the obedience of your confession unto the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution unto them and unto all: while they themselves also, with supplication on your behalf, long after you by reason of the exceeding grace of God in you. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.

Paul returns to his main theme, the sacramental glory of all life. He had touched upon the apostolic duties and endurances. Now he delineates in vigorous, rapid strokes his own adventurous, mystical, and often invalided activities. All that is transitory, superficial, not his own. But—

> The Lord hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the strength of Christ may rest upon me. Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

The sacramental comfort in all that happens, Christ in each and all, in Paul and in the Corinthians, no place for any private self, each and all brought gradually, in spite of let and hindrance, to their own perfection in Christ:

> Ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me; who to you-ward is not weak, but is powerful in you: for He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth through the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him through the power of God toward you. Try your own selves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? . . . We pray to God that ye may do that which is honourable, though we be as reprobate. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. For we rejoice, when we are weak, and ye are strong: this we also pray for, even your perfecting—Brethren, farewell. Be perfected; be comforted; be of the same mind; live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Great epistles were still to come, but S. Paul never wrote a finer letter than this. His natural style of excellent conversation breaks into short sentences, here and there of close-knit, intellectual eloquence. Passionate eloquence makes his faith soar hilarious. He gives himself away in love to men and gratitude to God. The memory of Jesus and the idea of transcendent, circumambient Christ ‘ not after the flesh ’ are perfectly harmonized, as only poetry can harmonize the hither and beyond. And in this letter more than any other, that peculiar Pauline charm, which to some is sometimes an offence, obtrudes itself. He talks of himself ; he talks at considerable length ; he does not weed his loquacity—when Paul is read aloud the attention of the audience may often be held more firmly if the reader ventures to omit some adjectives, some sentences, parentheses, eccentric divagations. He gives himself away. The Athenians called him a babbler. At Lystra he was Hermes ‘ the chief speaker.’ That is all true : and it is true that he convinces us by eloquence and not by argument. But that is because his eloquence is himself ; it is his sincerity, his evident conviction, his interest in you to whom he speaks ; nay, surely more, the secret is that Christ speaks in him ; and the imperfections of the instrument, imperfections in which an urbane reader delights, are no hindrance to the mind of Christ.

Moreover, it should be remembered that these ebullitions are as one to twenty if set against the good sense, the gravity and reverence of Paul's majestic homeliness. That was what impressed Roman magistrates, imperial officers, turbulent mobs, frightened mariners. And that was what the companion of his travels noticed and recorded, and his record still instructs devout admirers of the book of Acts.

# XV

## *ROME*

EPHESUS was S. Paul's centre for three successful years : all Asia heard the Word he carried far and wide. Then he ' purposed in the Spirit ' to go to Macedonia and Hellas, thence to Jerusalem, and thence to Rome. But his plan was greatly altered by events. Demetrius, a silversmith of Ephesus, complained that Paul, turning the world upside down with his new doctrines, had spoiled the smiths' trade in idols and would be the ruin of sacred Ephesus. The spark blazed into flame, and one of those mob-riotings which Luke describes with such gusto broke out. ' Great is Diana of the Ephesians ' they shouted for hours together, quieted at last by a prudent town clerk. Paul, restrained by his friends from facing the people (which the whole story of his travel shows him delighted to risk), was got away safely. He went to Macedonia and journeyed south, but could not achieve the voyage to Syria. Therefore returning through Macedonia he entered Asia Minor by Troas and worked south by ship and on foot to Caesarea ; then from Caesarea to Jerusalem. In Macedonia his diarist rejoined him. From this point he seems to have remained with Paul till at last Rome is reached and the history in Acts is concluded. The last nine chapters can hardly be matched for vivid power and beauty. We linger over Paul's farewell to the elders from Ephesus and the prayers upon the beach and the sailing through the islands of the Aegean Sea and the riot at Jerusalem. Paul's oration to the mob—when he spoke to them in Hebrew they stood still and listened and heard the story of Damascus and the vision of the Lord—then the rescue by the Roman soldiers and Claudius Lysias their captain who so nearly got into trouble by flogging the Roman citizen, but he wrote a wonderful letter to the governor at Caesarea and sent Paul thither in all honour and safety, yet as a prisoner.

And there Paul remained in captivity while Felix was succeeded by Festus and months and years passed and King Herod Agrippa as well as the Roman governors heard Paul and respected him. 'Almost,' said the king in sad irony, 'thou persuadest me to play the Christian.'

> And the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them : and when they had withdrawn, they spake one to another, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. And Agrippa said unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.

He had appealed before Agrippa came. And presently to Rome he was sent. Then comes the story of the voyage, vivid, terse, and rich in human character. Paul dominates ; but, more, is loved and trusted. In shipwreck he all but takes command. Certainly he saved the lives of all. And so at last Rome is entered.

The book comes to a very Pauline end.

The chief Jews of Rome came to Paul. They conversed, disputed, and Paul denounced their gross hearts and bade them know that 'this salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles.' 'And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.'

What endless talk went on in that hired dwelling ! What hours of depression when the 'messenger of Satan came to buffet him, that he should not be exalted overmuch' ! What unwonted leisure, meditation, clearing of an anxious mind, speculative faith ! What enjoyment of good company, of friends ! Such fancies occur to us. But what we know is that from thence certain letters were written to Macedonia and Asia which the world will not easily forget.

But before those, before Rome was reached, two other epistles had been written, to the Galatians, and to the Romans as yet unvisited.

Who were these Galatians ? The district of Cilicia and Pamphylia, Paul's old home and the scene of his first propagation of the Gospel, was part of the large province to which Rome had given the name of Galatia. And since Sir William Ramsay explored the antiquities of Asia Minor and wrote about Paul the Traveller it has been fashionable to consider the epistle to have been addressed to these southern people of the modern province and therefore as a possibly or probably early letter.

But Galatia was a kingdom long before it was a Roman province and the ancient Celtic kingdom of Galatia lay well away to the north in wild, romantic country. Paul did enter it on his second journey. He was not long there and we know little of his doings, but if the Epistle to the Galatians was addressed to the real Galatians of the north we do learn certain things in outline, and not a little startling these are.

The Gospel has been offered and quickly and enthusiastically received. To Paul himself warm affection has been rendered. And now suddenly all is changed. Judaizers have debauched the Galatians' faith. Having begun in the Spirit they are now being perfected in the flesh. Legal and ritual superstition is debasing Christian freedom. Paul is angry and sad, yet still in good hope ; still their loving father and they his little children. ' My brethren,' so in his own added script he concludes, tempering with tenderness the severity of the letter, as an old commentator says.

The letter opens with an authoritative and austere address :

> Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but from Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who raised Him from the dead), and all the brethren which are with me unto the churches of Galatia : Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this world with all its superincumbent weight of evil, according to the will of our God and Father : to Whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Then, with no thanksgiving as in other letters :

> I marvel that you are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel. . . . But though we or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema, accursed. Am I now persuading men ? or persuading God ?

These last words are almost wild. Throughout this epistle the language is unmistakably S. Paul's, but unique. He seems alone in a scarce known region, fighting, pleading, mastering wild men.

Then he tells of his own reception of the Gospel, by revelation, not by human instruction ; and gives that story of his early career to which reference was made in chapter xi above.

Then again he turns upon his adversaries (if such they must be) :

> O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you ? . . . Are ye so foolish ? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh ?

There is the theme of the letter. The Law, the Jewish rules and ritual, which the preceding piece of autobiography shows to be the new fashion, brought by interlopers, and adopted by the Galatians, will be the ruin of the Gospel because it is ' flesh,' materialism as we would say, and the Gospel is wholly spiritual. A certain part of the letter is engaged on the illustration of the fatal slavery of a material and superstitious religion, and a certain part of that part deals especially with the Jewish law. But the Jewish law is but one instance of the general principle : true religion is Spirit not Law. And the chief part of the argument is an explanation of what Spirit actually is, and a picture of the free, sweet life which the religion of the Spirit inspires and empowers. Galatians is Paul's Epistle of the Spirit.

However, Law has been named. The Mosaic Law is the notorious example of Law. And a long digression about Abraham, Moses, and Sinai ensues. To many a reader of the twentieth century in England this is tedious. Perhaps it was to the Galatians, especially if these were the real Galatians, the rude highlandmen of the northern kingdom, as the epistle surely seems to show they were. But S. Paul has this among his amiable weaknesses. He cannot resist a parenthesis. He enjoys a bit of Rabbinizing : yet, passing the allegory of Hagar, we can hardly suppose the pseudo-logical grammar work of ' seed ' and ' seeds ' was intended for anything but satire : and in this strange (but powerful) epistle satire would be quite congruous.

Let pass. Even in the midst of all this the great heart cries out. ‘ My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you, yea I could wish to be present with you now, and to change my voice ; for I am perplexed about you.’ And out of the Hagar-allegory he issues forth with a trumpet call :

> With freedom did Christ set us free : stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.

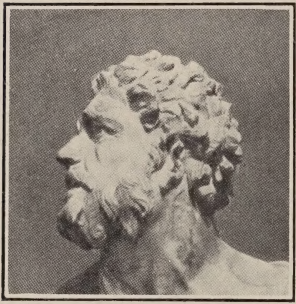
After which he proceeds to declare what Spirit is. Spirit is love, *agapê* : the only reality. ‘ In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love.’ What peace and joy ! ‘ I have confidence to you-ward in the Lord, that ye will be no otherwise minded. . . . I would that they which unsettle you would even mutilate themselves.’

> But I say, Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh ; for these are contrary the one to the other ; that ye may not do the things that ye would. But if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under any compelling law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest. . . . But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance : against such there is no law. And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof.

And he bids them walk by the Spirit, bearing one another’s burdens, in the fair, free life that Christian *agapê* renews the world with.

And now, glad, trusting, sure of his wild friends, the dearer for their roughness and childish caprice, Paul takes the paper from his clerk and writes in his own big script a final line or two—strange things he puts into the brief space—‘ the *stigmata* of Jesus ’—but most affectionate :

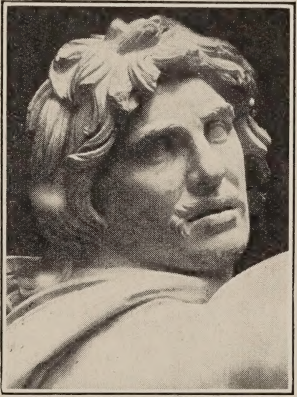
> See with how large letters I write unto you with mine own hand. Far be it from me to glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world, . . . From henceforth let no man trouble me : for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.



A Galatian.

Who were these Galatians ? The persons not the place are our real concern. They had quickly changed their mind since Paul's visit. Unless we put (as some do) the letter before he paid his second visit to the south Galatian churches they can hardly be the southern provincials. And if they were he would hardly tell them of the visit he paid to ‘ Syria and Cilicia ’ as a piece of news in his biographic sketch. Syria and Cilicia is the customary title for those parts in Acts and S. Paul ; but in this letter Paul names his troublous friends Galatians, ‘ O foolish Galatians.’

Are epithet and appellative particularly congruous ? There was an attraction in the South Galatian theory. It made so much simplification possible. But it is no use to call things simple when they are not ; and the evidence that historical critics have to deal with is not generally simple unless it has been artificially reduced. These ‘ Galatians ’ were evidently a rude, passionate people : affectionate yet fierce, and yet again capable of appreciating deep, unusual, spiritual secrets—the kind of secret we call mystical, the genuine ‘ mystery ’ religion of S. Paul. On all this he counts. In no letter is he so bold in mystery as in this. And he catches too other extravagances of soul from these men he is writing to : he feels their very presence, till at last he seizes the pen with his own hand and dashes down his burning sentences in a great startling script. He too is fiercely affectionate. He and they are no Syrian Hellenists : they are primitive, immediate, absolute, lifting their eyes to the hills of the robbers.


‘ My Little Children.’
(A Galatian.)

In a small Oxford commentary on Galatians Mr. Blunt provides some noticeable pictures. Among them is a photograph of a piece of Greco-Roman sculpture representing a Galatian, of the northern kingdom, not the southern provincial appendage. Lightfoot in his classic commentary on Galatians adduced a good many fair arguments for the northern destination. One of his arguments has been little approved of late : readers even smile at its fancifulness. He urges that the ardent temper of the Celt, the Gaul, may be recognized in the men whom he seemed to see depicted in S. Paul’s letter. Let us, before we make light of the historian’s imagination, compare the excursus in his commentary with the Galatian’s portrait given by Mr. Blunt. There are some South-Galatianizers whom that portrait has reconverted.

Where should Galatians be placed in the series of missionary letters ? After Thessalonians almost certainly.

Probably before Corinthians. That suits the 'quickly' of the opening protest. And there is an early air about the whole letter which habitual readers of S. Paul are wont to inhale refreshingly. The poet of the hymn of Charity in 1 Corinthians composed that masterly lyric after he had preluded its noble, self-denying thoughts in the later chapters of Galatians. Lightfoot put Galatians later than Corinthians, next to Romans. His reason was that the theme was the same, Law and Grace, Jew and Gentile. But he could hardly insist therefore on vicinity in point of time. One of the admirable qualities of Paul the active missionary was the complex activity of his thought. Every reader of Acts or of Epistles must be aware of his indefatigable attention to many persons and many problems, one after the other, two or three at a time. The Galatians gave him one kind of trouble, the Corinthians another. Gladly he spent his soul on all, taking up again the thread a new necessity had made him drop.

Galatians is one thread with Romans. Yet some Corinthian threads are woven also into Romans. For Romans is the deliberate treatise which concludes the first missionary period of Paul's course. When he wrote it he saw, on a large review of all that had happened, the supreme importance of a right relationship between the Jewish and Hellenistic strains in the community of Christian churches or assemblies. The affairs in Corinth had shown him this in part. The serious defection in Galatia had opened his eyes to the fuller significance of the matter: in the autobiography with which Galatians begins we perceive that warning being given and accepted. Nevertheless Galatians is not composed on that definite scheme.

It is personal : his disappointment with the Galatians, his affection towards them, his anxiety for their salvation. It is universal : his conviction that true religion and Christian life is so utterly spiritual that law and ritual must ruin life. But in Romans the interactions are more densely collected ; the opposing forces more distinctly envisaged ; the impelling causes more precisely discerned. From all he has done, suffered, learned, and experimented in expressing hitherto, Paul at last produces the treatise on Jew and Gentile in the Gospel of Christ which we know as the Epistle to the Romans.

Whence and when was the Epistle to the Romans written ? From Macedonia ? From Caesarea ? After the escape from Ephesus probably. Hardly from Caesarea, since Paul the prisoner could not well have counted then on a journey to Spain and a visit on the way and at his own disposal to Rome. Enough to recognize in Romans the last epistle of the missionary period, a treatise in which the experience of years and the busy thoughts of the earlier letters are set out clearly, weightily, in due proportion.

Romans is a treatise in form of letter and with the intimate affection of a letter. Yet it is a letter to persons Paul had not yet seen, and it evolves on a considered plan with distinct divisions. Thus :

| | |
|---|---|
| A i–iv | Salutation.<br>The sin of the whole world and justification for all through Christ. |
| B v–viii | What justification is : reconciliation and new life and the tender love of God the Father. |
| C ix–xi | Jew and Gentile : all to come home at last : God's profound providence. |

D xii–xvi { Christian goodness: patience, consolation, hope. Farewells.

B and C conclude with an *O altitudo*, D with a doxology.

The opening salutation contains a creed. Here and there in earlier epistles phrases and sentences occur, fragments which might be gathered into a formula of faith; but Romans opens with a careful summary of Paul's faith as it has reached expression at this point.

'The young Prince of Glory.'

> Paul, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which He promised afore by His prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning His Son, Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, Who was defined to be the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead; even Jesus Christ our Lord, through Whom we received grace and apostleship, unto obedience of faith among all the nations, for His Name's sake: among whom are ye also, called to be Jesus Christ's: to all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then, after the customary thanksgiving, that part of the creed is repeated which proclaims the theme of the epistle:

> The gospel . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God by faith unto faith.

And abruptly after this S. Paul draws an awful picture of the vicious Gentile world with austere economy of firmly-bitten line. Then he turns upon the Jew and involves him in the responsibility for all that wickedness: they practise, he (by his aloofness) consents. We understand what reason the old-fashioned Christians of Jerusalem had for mistrusting the free admission of the Gentiles, and what reason Paul had for insisting that the Gentiles must be brought in.

He addresses the Jew as it were at close quarters, using the second person singular, and asserts that even in his aloofness he is not innocent. Dost thou fulfil the Law thou hast? No: many a Gentile lives a better life than many a Jew. With the Law? Without the Law? There is a more real and inward Law which brings righteousness to each—'Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom God will not reckon sin.'

Not man's judgement of man; not the measure of our accomplishment; but our humility and trust in God's forgiveness—that is our blessedness whether we be Jew or Gentile. Go back beyond Moses to Abraham and with him believe on God that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, Who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification.

That ends the Introduction. The next division of the argument is introduced by repeating the last word 'justification.' 'Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through Whom also we have had our access into this grace wherein we stand; and let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God.'

What is this justification ? It is the peace of a quiet conscience. We trust and we accept. We claim no merit, no righteousness of our own. We throw ourselves upon the generous righteousness of God and therein rest. No, says Paul, that is but the start upon the new life now opened for you. That is indeed the starting-point : reconciliation to God, recognition of His unchanging goodwill. He never turned His face from you, but you from Him. Now you come home to Him; you are reconciled to Him ; you are sure of your ‘ at-onement ’—so we English readers have sometimes translated Paul’s ‘ reconciliation,’ and sometimes we impose a meaning on our English word which S. Paul never dreamed of in his Greek. But being thus reconciled, all life is before us still to live : and it will be a good life, a righteous life. ‘ Let us rejoice in hope ’ for the future. ‘ What ! shall we continue in sin that grace may abound ? God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein ? ’ And he goes on to show that Christian baptism is that tremendous reality. When the water closes over

Early Christian Lamp.

the head of the convert he leaves all that once made his very self behind him, he dies. When he again emerges it is a resurrection to new life, the life of Jesus Christ his Lord ; he is baptized into Him. That is what Paul considers real ritual. He is as extravagant therein as in his ‘ babbling ’—‘ I am crucified with Christ,’ etc.

Early Christian Lamp.

Then he looks back on the old ritual, the old privilege and obligation of the Law. Did it give you power for righteousness ? he asks. And he answers No ; it woke conscience. It made you yearn and fear and mourn, but it helped no further. And again he comes to close quarters and tells of his own agony of soul, the two laws warring within him, his impotence to do the good he longs for, his captivity under sin :

> O wretched man that I am ! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death.

Is S. Paul describing his present or his past state ? The twain are fused together. That is the quality of justification. On the one hand the past is past and done with. Mistrust and separation from God can never again disturb the soul. On the other hand the new life is but lived imperfectly ; there is failure, there are lapses ; therefore wretchedness, but with unconquerable hope. And with one thing more. There is the Spirit. ‘ As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear ; but ye received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God : and if children, then heirs, and joint heirs with Christ ; if it so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him.'

The Spirit. That is the supreme reality for S. Paul. Abstract as reality itself—a quality. Interfused with the spirit of man, and (as Paul goes on to say, and the author of the Wisdom of Solomon had already said) with the whole creation, with nature ; nature too being linked in suffering and hope with man, and held still in a certain bondage on account of man : till man's justification issues in perfection nature too must wait. Spirit is an abstract quality, a pervading influence. And yet most personal, or more than that, divinely personal. The Spirit makes intercession for us with God. And having said that S. Paul repeats it putting the name and title of his crucified and risen Master instead of the title Spirit : as in 2 Corinthians, ' the Lord is the Spirit.' The Spirit is the heart of God in man and all creation. The love of God manifesting itself in the grace of the Lord Jesus is the Spirit. What the breath of life is in merely physical life, that the Spirit is in the new life which Christ's people live, which is open to all men to live, and (Paul here darkly insinuates) is destined even for that wider circle of creation which is commonly called ' brute ' or even ' inanimate.'

And here the Spirit comes forth to complete Paul's trust and hope. Even now, while suffering and sin are still too strong for Christ's servants to be steadfast, the

Spirit Who makes men sons of God wins for them the indulgence of a father to his children :

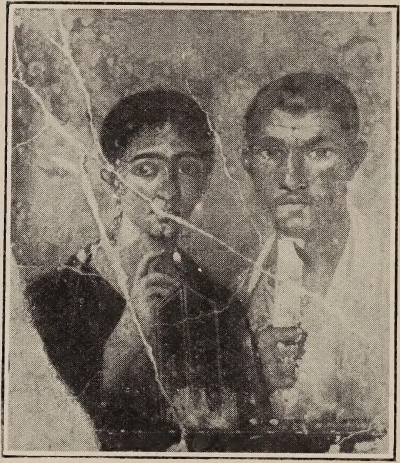
> The Spirit also helpeth our infirmity : for we know not how to pray as we ought ; but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered ; and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. . . . What then shall we say to these things ? If God is for us, who is against us ? He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things ? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect ? It is God that justifieth ; who is he that shall condemn ? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather that was raised from the dead, Who is at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

With that outburst of Paul's overwhelming persuasion we pass to the third division of his epistle. Solemnly he declares his profound and passionate affection for his brothers in blood and faith, the Jews. He rehearses the deposit of their trust. He repeats his former Pharisaic—which is all but Christian—creed :

> Whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, whose is the one God that is over all, blessed for ever. Amen.

Who among us has not wondered at the fate of the Christ-bearers in history, the nations to whom a divine idea is entrusted, and they hand it on, but perish—yea perish morally—under the strain ? Such was Athens, such the Byzantine empire. In this part of his argument

S. Paul seems to be expressing wonder of that kind as he contemplates the glory and the duty and the fate of Israel. He broods over the enigma and the prophets of Israel help him to understand. God so ordained it. Who dare ask why? But God ordained not ultimate oblivion for His own chosen people: quite otherwise. They handed on their trust and lost all in doing so. The Gentiles have received the trust, with a like duty and peril attached. Let the Gentiles be lowly-minded and faithful. Finally the fruit of all this tragic husbandry shall be the winning of the wide world and the return, the resurrection of Israel.



Romans of S. Paul's time.

> Did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid: but by their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles. If their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? . . . If the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? . . . And so all Israel shall be saved. . . .
>
> O the depth of the riches and the wisdom of God! How unsearchable are His judgements and His ways past tracing out. . . . For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things. To Him be the glory for ever. Amen.

The letter ends with a vision of the fair and noble Christian life in which Jew and Gentile are one people, one body and many members, each fulfilling his own vocation. Commandment for the conduct of such a life is given in that inimitable style of S. Paul, his grandest style, surpassing his poetry and eloquence. He bids his brothers live too in loyalty to the empire as to a divine ordinance. And he gathers up precepts into universal principle : ‘ Owe no man anything save to love one another : for he that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law. . . . Love worketh no ill to his neighbour : love therefore is fulfilment of the law.’ And consequent on the principle is Paul’s now developed apocalypse, developed in a more diaphanous simplicity :

> And this, knowing the season, that now it is high time for you to awake out of sleep : for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand : let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day ; not in revelling, strife, jealousy. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

He touches, as he did to the Corinthians, on scruples about meats and days and such-like observances. And, as he did for the Corinthians, so here he refers the question to a high principle. ‘ None liveth or dieth to himself. . . . The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. . . . We that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each please his neighbour. For Christ also pleased not Himself ; but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon Me. . . . The God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus. . . . The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope in the power of the Holy Ghost.’

He tells them of his collection and how he means to carry it to the poor saints at Jerusalem. Thence he will journey to Spain, visiting Rome on the way. And he ends: ‘ Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.’

A postscript follows with greetings, exceedingly interesting for it contains a long list of Roman names. This is concluded by ‘ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.’

Then comes another short postscript with greetings. This is Tertius’ private addition : ‘ I, Tertius, who write the epistle, salute you in the Lord.’

And a sonorous doxology is placed at the end of the whole, with words and turns of thought which make us think of the Pastoral epistles—‘ mystery,’ ‘ silence,’ ‘ the only wise God.’ Critical vigilance is roused. Is this evidence for the genuine character of the Pastorals ; or for the extraneous origin of this appendage here ? And the whole of this conclusion, broken and resumed ; has a fragment from some lost letter been joined to Romans for convenient preservation ? It may be, but need not be so. The quest is of shadows, through a glass darkly.

# XVI

# *PAUL THE PRISONER: CHRIST AND THE CHURCH*

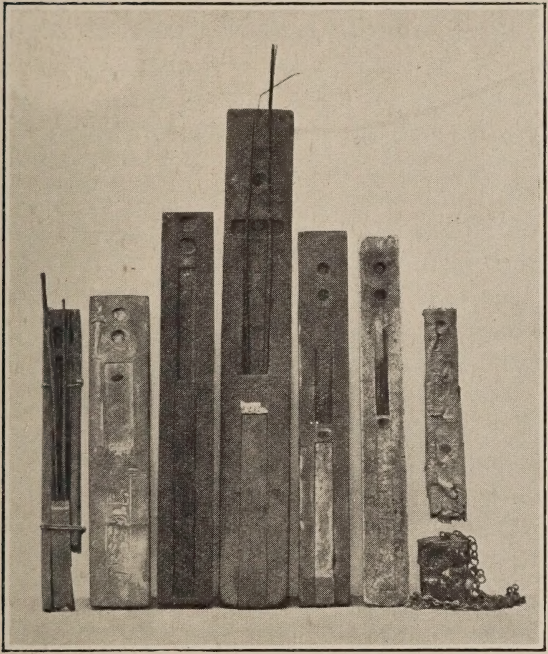
'I TERTIUS who write the epistle.' That formula may excuse a summary abbreviation of the critical introduction to the epistles of S. Paul's captivity which an earlier fashion might have demanded. Few doubt to-day that Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon are genuine letters from S. Paul, written while he was a prisoner in Rome. If some doubts are still entertained about Ephesians—its rather peculiar style, its references to 'the holy apostles and prophets' and to 'the household of God built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets' and perhaps a little further seemingly anachronistic language—these may be set aside with no great peril if we consider the various manner in which S. Paul's letters were brought to shape. It seems likely that he wrote none of them with his own hand throughout: his autographic conclusion to Galatians is emphasized as unusual. Sometimes he dictated and a friendly clerk took down his very words. Sometimes he sketched a letter which the clerk wrote out full and fair. Thus we may suppose Romans to have been composed. And thus Ephesians, which stands to the Roman series in the same relation as Romans to the missionary series, a treatise in which the spontaneous thoughts of the letters are maturely gathered up. The process is indicated in Romans by Tertius' postscript. 'Some very ancient authorities omit *at* Ephesus' in the opening lines of

Ephesians. This is explained by the direction at the end of Colossians to pass on the circular letter then lying at Laodicea. Ephesians is this circular letter, a public treatise like Romans. And this may be sufficient to account for the peculiarities of each epistle. If not quite sufficient, we may nevertheless leave the question half answered, and use the epistle as S. Paul's ; for its relation to Colossians, and the other kind of peculiarity—its remarkable consonance with Paul's uniquely active mind—makes absurdity of scruples against using Ephesians for illustration of the faith, the consummated faith of S. Paul.

The epistles from Rome are four : Ephesians, the treatise, is logically, though not necessarily in point of time, the conclusion of the four. Colossians overlaps Ephesians in subject, the Person of Christ and its consequences in the life of Christians. Philemon is a private letter sent with Colossians to a citizen of Colossae. Philippians is more like a letter of the former period, prompted by the situation, which at first sight seems to be S. Paul's recent arrival at Rome and the good hope—yet sense of peril—with which he faces destiny. Many, looking closer, put Philippians latest in the series. But the order of time, since the time is but two years in all, is not of very great importance. Let us read Philippians first, for a breeze of morning blows freshly through it.

> Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.

He does not say ' to the church which is at Philippi.' He had already begun to drop that early appellation. One main development of his creed in the Roman letters will be ' The one universal Church.' A church, in the sense of an assembly here or there, will henceforth be a confusing



Writing Materials.

term and will be avoided. On the other hand ‘ the saints with the bishops and deacons ’ indicates a degree of order, of institution, in the Christian families which has not hitherto been so plainly marked.

Thanking God for the good progress of the Philippians, and praying for their further progress, Paul goes on to tell them of his fortunes at Rome, how he is indeed thwarted by some, but helped by others, and anyhow all are preaching Christ, not without effect among the pagan population. He glances at his perils (as an accused prisoner) and is led thereby to make a profession of faith about life beyond the grave and to draw an inference of security, both of which have an apostolic unexpectedness : ‘ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. . . . I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ ; for it is very far better : yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and bide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith.’

Then he encourages them in that progress and joy, of which the secret is goodwill and unity, a divine secret for it is all one with the paradox of the Incarnation, Jesus Christ so emptying Himself as to enrich all. It is a famous passage :

> If there is therefore any comfort in Christ, any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassions—be of one mind, one accord . . . in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself. . . . Obedient unto death, yea the death of the cross. . . . That in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

He will send Timothy to bear his news and to return with theirs. Epaphroditus has been very ill but is recovering. ‘ Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord, and keep the faith pure and undefiled.’ The faith !—you know how I received, what I renounced for it, how cheap the price, how glorious the hope. ‘ Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect . . . but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and pressing forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.’

Imperfection, opposition, the peril of death : yet as the letter draws to its close those undertones of joy are heard again and swell into a chord of high theology : ‘ Our commonwealth is in heaven ; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ : Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself.’

The sentence is a treasure to English Churchmen, as is the Philippian farewell blessing, ‘ The peace of God which passeth all understanding.’ For now the letter is to end with repetition of its glad colloquial talk—‘ Rejoice, rejoice again—finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable ’—a lover’s letter like 2 Corinthians about nothings which break into immensities. It is to end with peculiar intimacy of affection, intensity of gratitude, and after many paradoxes of tenderness and almost fierceness with this paradox of the then instant hour—‘ The saints salute you, especially they that are of Caesar’s household.’ The Caesar was Nero, who will presently put Paul to death, make Christianity an illicit religion, and change the empire from being the missionaries’ patron to the blasphemous, persecuting foe.

Colossae : Take paper. Sketch a map. Mark Ephesus and then that neighbouring valley of the Lycus. Read the chapter of historical description in Lightfoot’s commentary, and the pages—among his finest—in the *Adonis* volume of Frazer’s *Golden Bough*. Then, with that picture in the eye of the mind, read the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians where ‘ the saints in light ’ are ‘ translated into the kingdom of the Son of God . . . the Father’s love . . . Who is the image of the invisible God the firstborn of all creation ; for in Him were all things created, in the heaven and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers ; all things have been created through Him and unto Him ; and he is before all things, and in Him all things consist.'

Is it to this eternity and pre-existence and transcendent divinizing of all the dreams of the religions of nature that the plain creed prefixed to Romans has grown ?

This indeed is not a creed. It is too opulent : more like a rhapsody. It is the free emotion of a letter-writer and will be regulated presently in the treatise to the Ephesians. Yet it would perhaps have startled S. Paul's ancient comrades in the church of the Pharisees no more than did the creed of Romans. If Paul were convinced that Jesus Whom the Christians worshipped is the Messiah, then he may well expatiate upon His wondrous person in the terms of that praise of Wisdom which was the Messianic theology of the Hebrew Wisdom writers in Proverbs and kindred books. Nor perhaps would the Asiatic converts from the pagan villages be astonished. If we may draw inference from what we learn of their strange yearning rituals two centuries later, they would recognize a familiar strain in this confession of S. Paul's larger faith. The epistle gives utterance in subsequent pages to Paul's hostility to much of this pagan bastard philosophy, as well as to Pharisaic legality :

> Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day : which are a shadow of things to come ; but the body is Christ's. Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels, taking his stand upon the things which he hath seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast by the Head from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increaseth with the increase of God.

PHILIPPI.

A congeries of Rabbinic-mystic jargon ! The phrase 'taking his stand' etc. is according to the translation of the R.V. margin, and represents a terse three words in the ancient Greek text, a text so strange that old copyists and modern scholars have tried ingenious amendments. But Sir William Ramsay found two quotations of almost exactly the same formula on slabs in two temples in Asia Minor, recording initiation into ' mysteries ' or sacramental ritual : ' I have contemplated the sacred drama : now I walk upon the holy way' is the sense in paraphrase. And it is no base piety. Here indeed S. Paul rejects the whole Gnostic business in the lump. But in other parts of this, and in other epistles, he approaches the language and seems to adopt something of the ideas of these dim, yearning hearts ; as well he might who wrote of the Gentile world to the Roman Christians that ' God manifested unto them that which might be known of God. For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity.'

So from various quarters light came to Paul during his travels as he meditated on his Lord's guidance and influence, his predestinating hand and his penetrating vitality. But his own meditation, his own obedience and unceasing prayer, showed him more than any illumination from without : ' I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision —it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ.' Certainly that revelation was interdependent with human relationships, his anxious care for his converts, his compassion for men's ignorance, his gratitude : ' for the Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit.' A marked stage in his divine education was that determination ' no longer to know Christ after the flesh,' and it was contemporaneous with determination ' to know no man henceforth after the flesh.' Whether Paul ever saw our Lord in Jerusalem, ever heard His voice, we know not. How much he ever learned of the Galilean ministry, we know not. More and more, and at last determinedly, he shaped his creed upon the Lord Who is the Spirit, Christ Jesus the Crucified Victor, ever living, invisible, indwelling in Paul his bond-servant, in the movement of man's history, both now and (as he more and more distinctly recognized) through all the ages past and yet to come.

Therefore in this developed creed of Paul we admire a firm precision in contrast to the vague sentiment of the foreign half-philosophies. Paul believes in reconciliation through the cross, and can believe therein securely since the Crucified is also the Creator : creation before the world began and sacrifice consummated in restored creation ; that is also the theology of Christian Liturgies in their primitive form. ' For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell ; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the Blood of His cross.'

And we admire no less the firm hold upon morality as all one with spirituality, with truth—' and you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprovable before Him : if so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven ; whereof I Paul was made a minister.'

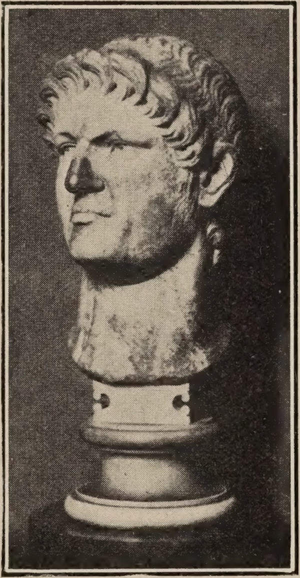
So the precepts to wives, husbands, children, servants, which conclude the epistle are introduced with a magnificent piece of the new theology :

> If ye then were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your

> mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ Who is our life shall be manifested then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth. . . . Put on as God's elect a heart of compassion . . . even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye : and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which also ye were called in one body ; and be ye thankful.

'In one body.' That term recurs in Colossians. It represents an idea. The company of the faithful are the body of Christ. This had already been presented in a kind of parable to the Corinthians, and is a significant imaginative adornment in other of the earlier epistles. To the Colossians S. Paul talks more directly. He repeats the word as though expecting it to be understood, and almost literally. In the treatise to the Ephesians he declares that he does mean it quite literally. And he joins it emphatically to his new doctrine of the Church. And he uses it also in explication of the larger view he has now of Resurrection and Advent. All combines into an endless vista—eternal, finite, yet unbounded—of mankind (or all creation) progressing into absolute unity with Christ. And he sets all this bold argument out as argument not picture ; in language which is adopted from physical science ; bringing nature and spirit, appearance and reality, into one continuous ascent. And then he concludes, as in Colossians and under the same heads but with additions and a genial richness of illustration and encouragement, by a practical application to Christian morals.

Ephesians claims the reader's utmost devotion. Time must be given, attention fixed, memory and meditation long drawn out. A first reading will attract, repel, impress. At the third or fourth a window will be opened on a fresh view of the truth of things. The tenth or twentieth will prove that the interest is endless. What once seemed the meaning was only part of it. The accent has shifted, and the main purport is not what at first seemed most important. Any scheme or analysis we draw up has but transitory value. This epistle is like nature, of infinite variety.


Nero.

Take the first chapter. For a while you are tossed in a welter of words. Read it again and aloud. Read both by ear and by mind. Certain words like 'will' and 'glory' strike the ear again and again. Then groups of words form recurrent ideas. One group points back to a foreordaining purpose of God; another to a summing up of all this now; another to the extension of the purpose into the future.

The whole is presented in a supersensual sphere 'the heavenly places.' And, not in, but Himself all one with, that real and not imaginative sphere of life, is Christ; Who presently is cited by a remarkable title 'the Beloved.'

Richness, fullness, variety, and completion, is another grouped idea, and the Ephesians themselves come in here as finding room among all the saints within this abundant immaterial space, which is the means for the working-out of the divine purpose, and is now named the Church and defined as ‘ the body of Christ, the fullness of Him that is all in all being fulfilled.’

Dr. J. A. Robinson, the Dean of Wells, is not responsible for what is here said, but it would not have been said but for his instruction, herewith gratefully acknowledged. In his *Commentary on Ephesians*, and sufficiently in the English *Exposition* extracted from the Commentary and separately published by Messrs. Macmillan, an apostolic doctrine is revived which had almost passed into oblivion ; viz. that Christ is an inclusive title which means, not just the Lord Jesus, but Jesus Christ together with all the faithful. That is the Messianic (or Christian) idea in the Old Testament. So also in the New. And in Ephesians Paul elaborates it. That is what is meant by Head and Body in this connection. Thus the Church is the Body of Christ, not metaphorically but literally part of Christ. And more than a mere part ; the fullness, complement, completion of Christ, the completion which is still going on according to the real apostolic doctrine, intellectual doctrine instead of picturesque. As Dr. Robinson clearly proves, the translation of S. Jerome in the Latin Vulgate is at this point right and our English versions are wrong : not ‘ the fullness of Him that filleth all things ’ but ‘ of Him that is all in all being fulfilled.’ An apostolic doctrine, much neglected but conserved in the Athanasian Creed—‘ one Christ, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of Manhood into God—and by Tennyson in his *In Memoriam*, ‘ Ring in the Christ that is to be.’

S. Paul now addresses himself to his Asiatic Greek converts—let us for shortness call them ‘Ephesians.’ They are of course Gentiles and he assures them of their place in this Body. Heavenly places, God’s mysterious, i.e. mystical or historically sacramental purpose, His wisdom, the rich abundance of all this, the reconciling virtue of the Blood of Christ : all combine to encourage and assure. All is one household. ' All building '—for again the English versions must be corrected ; an idea not a visible object is the illustration ; not ' each several building ' but ' all spiritual building has Christ Jesus Himself for cornerstone and groweth into one holy temple fitly framed together.'

Then this development into ever fuller unity is presented again in its universality, as a principal idea, a ' mystery.' This is vivified by a more personal illustration than ' building.' The margin of the Revised Version gives an exacter rendering than the text, ' fatherhood ' not ' family ' : ' For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, from Whom every fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named.' In the suprasensual, supracelestial sphere ' Person,' ' Father, ' Son,' etc., have a meaning of which we use but the reflection : compare S. John's metaphysic, ' We love because He first loved us,' and our Lord's ' None knoweth the Father but the Son and those to whom the Son willeth to reveal this true fatherhood.' These illustrations punctuate Paul's argument, and here another system of punctuation crosses the illustration. Thrice Paul begins a prayer for the Ephesians. Twice he loses the prayer in further thoughts which spring out of it. At last he completes the prayer and adds a doxology : ' Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.'

' Exceeding abundantly . . . the Church . . . in Christ Jesus—all generations of the age of the ages.' Thus, full, far, deep, the actual and organized advance of the 'great flock gathered together in all the parts of the world' is heralded.

> I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called . . . giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in all. But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. . . . He gave some to be apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ . . . from Whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through every joint of the supply, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.

Paul, converted outside Damascus, entered the Christian family at Antioch, whence he carried the Gospel to the Asiatic Greeks in Cilicia. Hitherto there had been Jewish Christians first, then also Hellenistic Jewish Christians at Jerusalem; and already these had been jealous of one another. The martyrdom of Stephen consecrated the jealousy. Paul opened the gate to the Gentiles and roused a storm which sometimes raged and continually smouldered. And he knew better even than his Jewish opponents how dangerous this new freedom was. The Gentile churches which he founded gave him infinite anxiety. Heathen vices defiled their Christian rule, and the Jewish and Gentile elements did not dwell harmoniously in these communities which were generally of mixed membership. He suffered at their hands. But he went on bravely, firmly, generously, loving more the less he was loved, and never abating his authority. And in trial as in success he continually learned more and more of the mind of Christ. But his was a restless activity, journeys, perils, costly affections, the weight of anxious care for all these various churches—he just went on, doing the best he could, doing it indeed marvellously well.

Then came the catastrophe at Jerusalem ; detention at Caesarea ; imprisonment at Rome. He 'abode at last two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching . . . teaching . . . with all boldness, none forbidding . . . being such a one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus' : admirable resting-place for the history ; quietude at last and leisure.

Day after day one looks at fields, mountains, seashore, the native scene of ever various charm, but he scarce understands what he is too busy to contemplate. And then some day in a quiet hour the essence is revealed, the idea descends, as it were from beyond, as Plato sometimes conceived the absolute Beauty or even the absolute Good, not this or that example but Itself complete, harmonious, unique.

A schoolboy has to write an essay, or his master a book. He collects facts and dates, makes notes, arranges, seeks a general view ; discovers more facts and corrects first judgement ; turns the thing over and over in his mind without getting nearer to a conclusion. Then a leisure time comes. He looks back on his labour and does not worry about the problem. And, without effort, uncalled, the idea descends as it were from beyond : the way is clear.

So to S. Paul with his problem of the several churches and their conflicting variations. In the unembarrassed leisure of captivity the idea descended from 'the heavenly sphere.' The conflicting varieties need no suppression. Variety is the ' fullness ' of vital unity. There is one only Church, not an institution but a mode of life. Jew and Gentile, subtle Greek and rude barbarian, all quarrelling among these different spirits is transformed in purer, larger space. And ' space ' and all such metaphors mislead. That life of his own, lost and risen anew within the life of Jesus Christ his Lord, is no peculiar experience of his own : it is the everyday reality of Christians living after the Spirit. The Christ Paul knows is not after the flesh but after the Spirit ; and that is not dim poetry but good sense. The servants of Christ Jesus are really His members ; their common fellowship is really His body ; for what is real is not material nor metaphorical. One Spirit, one Body, one calling, one hope ; the whole Christ growing, as what lives does always grow, in unity nourished by variety, destined for maturity. Here is the ' mystery ' of the Church, of the Person of Christ, of the pre-ordaining goodwill of God, of the final destiny of mankind—one man full-grown in Christ—with ages of ages in patient prospect of hope ; and the Church, with all its troublesome varieties of character, is the lively agent of this abundant redemption. The Church the Body of Christ : unity through variety : the one faith working through love. That is what Paul calls in this epistle the daedal, ' many-coloured ' wisdom of God.

' Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children ; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you.' Paul is practical as he is eloquent, and shrewdly the last pages of the epistle are filled with warnings as well as precepts, applying the idea of unity through variety to the everyday relationships of life. Then he closes with a special form of his usual grace : ' Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness.'

‘ Uncorruptness,’ freedom from the canker of material stuff, is the complement of the ‘ more than heavenly places ’ with which the epistle opens. As far as possible S. Paul has avoided picture-talking in this epistle. This final term of intellectual morality just notifies his readers that perfect avoidance of picture-language is impossible, they must interpret him intelligently with a holy wit. But so it is : ‘ Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God,’ and he has been speaking of eternal hopes interspersed with transitory affairs. ‘ Redeem the time,’ he says, ‘ for the days are evil.’ ‘ Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross.’

## XVII

## *MEMORIALS OF S. PAUL*

THE epistles of S. Paul show how he established and how he governed churches in the Gentile world. He lets us perceive much about the characters of the men and women who composed these communities ; their faith, mingled with superstition ; their Christian life, often lapsing into heathen immoralities, more generally conscientious but embarrassed by heathen environment ; the sacraments of Baptism and the Body and Blood of Christ to which he attached deep significance. He claims the authority of general apostolic tradition for his interpretation of the Lord's Supper, and it seems that he organized his churches on the lines of the church at Jerusalem, which was itself ordered on the lines of the Jewish synagogue. But we get the picture of the church at Jerusalem from Acts, and are bound to make allowance for the possibility that the picture is coloured by later experience of the author as a Christian churchman. Acts opens indeed with a marked simplicity, but proceeds with perhaps an ideal rapidity to the ' council ' and the almost episcopal authority of James.

Such authority indeed is conspicuous in Paul's letters, for he rules his churches very completely. Yet not quite according to the precision of Acts : there is a flexibility and variety in experimenting rather than a rule for reference.

He appointed a ministry, and it is an adaptation from the synagogue. There are presbyters or elders and there are deacons. The presbyters are called bishops sometimes, and the titles seem to describe the same persons according to the different duties they combined. But as an institution these orders are rather loosely settled. We are not told of their having exclusive functions in the administration of sacraments. In cases of discipline Paul calls for action upon the whole company of the 'saints' or 'brethren': and leadership in the community seems to depend more on certain persons than on an official order.

We make acquaintance with a woman who is a deacon. The informal ministry of women is evidently used and valued. The possession of a good house in which the saints can meet gives prestige.

When we pass from the missionary period to the Roman captivity a notable development appears. But it is a theological rather than an institutional development. The Epistle to the Ephesians presents Paul's idea of the one Church which is the living body of Christ; and this ideal title supersedes the plural 'churches,' of the several communities. The idea is a unity through variety, and the variety is illustrated by an enlarged list of offices—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers. But these terms indicate personal varieties of fitness for varieties of service: the perfecting of all the saints unto the complex work of ministering. So far as Ephesians evidences development in Paul's church-order, it implies less not more precise distinction of officers and rule, more spontaneous concert.

But something very different appears in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. All is still archaic. Presbyters and bishops are still two titles for one order. But it is a quite definite order. Paul, in Acts, ordains his presbyters with prayer and laying on of hands, which was a form of blessing very variously used when special services were required of any one. In the Pastoral Epistles the blessing has a particular formality for the particular and authoritative office. The personal character required of presbyters and deacons is delineated with beautiful piety. Certainly it is after the mind of Paul, and in the ordinals of the later Church we recognize the effective spirit of these excellent epistles. Yet the touch of language is not quite that of the Paul we know hitherto, and 'church,' 'faith,' 'godliness,' mean something subtly changed from the meaning such words used to carry on his pen. Paul the missionary, the theologian, the lover of the brethren, the bondservant of the Lord Jesus Christ, was a firm and practical ruler of men ; but 'a great ecclesiastic' would have been an unsuitable description of him ; it would have missed the mark. In these epistles that aspect of his character seems to have gained pre-eminence, and sometimes we are almost inclined to shorten the phrase to 'an ecclesiastic' : sometimes, not often, the scathing admonition of these epistles enters the boundary of the average.

These epistles have been called the Pastoral Epistles long since. In the use of to-day a 'Pastoral' is the letter of a bishop to his flock. When the term was applied to these epistles it meant a letter to bishops. Timothy and Titus were no mere presbyters — fellow-presbyters as S. Peter calls himself in his address to the presbyters of the dispersion in Asia. Timothy and Titus are ruling bishops, like bishops of the second century except that their office is temporary. S. Paul has appointed them to be his suffragans in Ephesus and Crete during his absence.

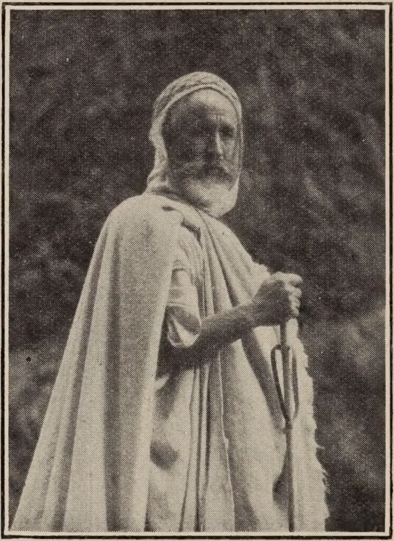
When was this appointment made ? What was the occasion of the three letters ? Where do they stand in the series of Pauline epistles and in relation to one another?

No place can be found for them within the period of Acts. If S. Paul wrote them he must have been set free, become again a traveller, and then once more he must have been imprisoned and this time put to death. And to such a second imprisonment 2 Timothy plainly refers.

'But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry.' So he bids Timothy, after warning him of the difficult task he has to face. The warning and encouragement are weighty, affectionate, and worthy of S. Paul. So assuredly are the unforgettable sentences which follow:

> For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved His appearing.

To bookish readers who are scrupulous of language, there is a curious flavour in the last six words, and even the great central utterance is curiously reminiscent of certain phrases in the early epistles. But none can justly doubt that this noble peroration to a life's loyalty comes from S. Paul substantially. The requests, farewells, and judgement and courage with which the whole concludes confirm the impression: 'Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas forsook me, having loved this present world, and went to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee: for he is useful to me for ministering. But Tychicus I sent to Ephesus. . . . Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord will render unto him. . . . At my first defence no one took my part but all forsook me . . . but the Lord stood by me . . . and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. The Lord will deliver me from every evil, and will save me unto His heavenly kingdom : to Whom be the glory for ever and ever.'



‘ Titus, my true child.’

The other two epistles must necessarily be fitted into some earlier place. But they bear the mark of later composition upon them ; they are farther away from the real Paul. Of course that will be denied by those who are satisfied that these epistles are simply and wholly S. Paul's own writing. And the case may be persuasively set out, up to a point. Of late this has been done with more careful plenitude than before, and the fashion even begins to turn that way. I prefer to quote Dr. Hort's judgement from *The Christian Ecclesia*. His vision of the early Church was so far-ranging, his tact of complete scholarship was the issue of such careful erudition that it is difficult indeed to hold out against his impulse, to see for oneself when he has let you see with his eyes :

> On the questions of their authenticity and integrity I shall say no more now than that in spite of by no means trivial difficulties arising from comparison of the diction of these and the other epistles bearing S. Paul's

> name, I believe them to be his, and to be his as they now stand. The supposed difficulties of other kinds seem to me of no weight. About S. Paul's life after the time briefly noticed in the last verse of Acts, we know absolutely nothing from any other source beyond the bare fact of his death at Rome : and it is to the interval between the Roman captivity mentioned in Acts and his death that the epistles, with the recent incidents referred to in them, must assuredly belong.

This is opinion without reasons fully given, which would have been impertinent to the lecture from which it is taken. But it has much weight. For it is consonant with Hort's whole judgement on the canon of the New Testament. He deliberately abstained from bold rejection of traditional assignments. Even of 2 Peter he is said to have said that after due consideration he would say, Not Peter's : and then, considering again, would refuse to say so. And readers of his life, letters, and books perceive the hesitation to spring from abundance of knowledge in a larger field than specializing scholars commonly traverse : he had *theoria*, a complete view. Sometimes he gave reasons tersely but to all the points, yet concentrated on the one or two points which he saw were vitally important ; as in his introduction to the Apocalypse, which so struck Dr. Sanday that in a remarkable review of that commentary he confessed himself all but obliged to change the conclusion of a lifelong study and to date the Apocalypse before the fall of Jerusalem, during the period of confusion and ominous decline in the Roman Empire. And therein Hort's deliberately critical independence was asserted. For the early date of the Apocalypse was not the vulgar reading of the tradition, but it was a harmonious part of a complete view of the life and writings of S. John according to a magnanimous scholar's judgement of the large general Johannine tradition.

Thereto the problem of language was attached. And for the Pastorals a like problem is posed, and Hort does not deny its difficulty. He sees in it the one objection which strongly moves him. But he can, he believes, meet it. Perhaps Dr. Hort, and other critics of his day and place, pressed niceties of language farther than the half-popular Greek of the New Testament allows. Part of the defence he makes for Pauline authorship, as the rest of the lecture shows, rests upon a primitive interpretation of words and phrases in the Pastorals which, on the face of them, flavour of a later state of church order and theology : as in 1 Timothy instead of ‘ the church, the pillar of the faith ’ he would understand ‘ a congregation of saints which, in whatever place, is one of the upholders of true faith ’ ; and this is indicated by the absence of the definite article in the Greek.

Now that perhaps presses a linguistic nicety too far. And on the other hand the great number of new words in the Pastorals, and of words not merely new for Paul but unused in the rest of the New Testament, as well as the considerable number of words which the Pastorals have in common with later documents of the New Testament but not with Paul, is a nicety of language which may very properly be scrutinized in New Testament Greek. For this is a phenomenon which may be observed in the history of any language as it changes character step by step with change in the age and conditions of the people whose habit of thought the language expresses. Our English language in speech and in print is markedly different since the war from what it was before it. The difference in language between the Pastorals and the early Pauline epistles is not like the difference between Cardinal Newman’s Oxford Sermons and his *Sermons to Mixed Con-*

*gregations* or his *Grammar of Assent*, but rather like the difference between either or both of those and an article on Newman's Life and Mind which might appear in a Review to-day. There is a real difference of language, faith, subject, in Newman's Anglican and Roman period, but one and the same man speaks all through. The writer of to-day will use phrases which no good writer would have used fifty years ago, and some of the phrases arise from a changed environment of thought and from an average theology instead of a unique genius.

And the serious difficulty appears there. Paul in the Pastorals is an essentially different Paul from Paul in the earlier epistles : the style is only one of many indications of this patent fact. Paul telling the Galatians that he is crucified with Christ writes in another style from what he uses in directing the worship of the Corinthians, and when he sets forth his mature idea of the Church to the Ephesians he has a still more remarkable change of style. But he is the same apostolic man throughout, the same bondservant of the Lord Jesus Christ. But Paul formulating rules in the Pastorals, and still more in denouncing heresy and misconduct (whether or no these heresies and vices are near akin to those at Corinth or Colossae) is not the same apostolic man as he stands plainly forth before. It is not that a fiery heart is mellowed, or embittered, by age : it is that an essential character has disappeared.

And yet passages may be quoted from the Pastorals in correction of this rough and ready estimate. Perhaps such passages checked Dr. Hort, and if so our judgement must at least be timorous. But search for these passages. Notice how far more frequent they are in 2 Timothy than in the other two epistles. Notice how abruptly they occur in the other epistles, how they are sometimes compensated (as it were) by the context. Consider whether some such explanation as this following be (not certain indeed but) a reasonable imagination: In 2 Timothy we have actually the last letter S. Paul ever wrote, from prison at Rome, shortly before Nero put him to death. But the whole epistle is made up with other fragments from his later writings, and a continuous framework is supplied by the ecclesiastical scholars who formed the *Corpus Paulinum*, the Church's edition of S. Paul's epistles. In 1 Timothy and Titus we have epistles substantially composed by scholars of like kind and date, possessing a good deal of fragmentary writings from Paul's own hand or dictation, themselves being Pauline men, ardent disciples of their master whom, however, they knew not in the flesh, and earnest in their desire to edify or reform the Church and ministry of their own time. The literary fashion of their time allowed much freedom in that class of composition. They were engaged upon a task of piety, towards the faithful of their day and still more toward the memory of their saint: the idea of fraud enters not into the question.

For us readers of to-day this imagination—let it be no careless certitude—is surely more pious toward S. Paul than an obstinate deference to tradition. For the Pastorals are exquisite manuals of devotion for modern churchmen as for medieval, especially for lowly-minded priests who know how to interpret even the bitter pages by the rule of tender conscience—all is for self-examination. But thus also we preserve reverence to S. Paul. To follow him from Damascus to Rome, reading on from Thessalonians to Romans and then to Ephesians, but after that to find him what appears in 1 Timothy and Titus is melancholy.

Is this 'such a one as Paul the aged,' Where is our *Cœur de Lion*? Had Marcion that reverence when he omitted the Pastorals from his, the earliest collection of S. Paul's epistles? Or does Marcion's omission witness to the general refusal of the very early Church to recognize the Pastorals as perfectly Pauline?

# XVIII

## *JEWISH AND HELLENISTIC IDEALS*

AT this point we pass from one section of the New Testament to another, from the Judaic to the Hellenistic. The two overlap indeed. The whole has taken Hellenistic form and is written in the later Hellenistic Greek. S. Paul and S. Luke are more or less Hellenistic by education and temper. But a broad distinction may be recognized, a line may be drawn. The three early Gospels are distinctly Galilean. S. Paul is the Christian Pharisee. The bold doctrine of the Person of Christ in Colossians and Ephesians issues from the wisdom of the Jewish Church. The Acts tells the story of the movement from Jerusalem of the Jews to Europe of the Greeks. The language of Luke, Gospel and Acts, is a scholar's adaptation of what he gathered from Judaic sources. The language of S. Paul's epistles was dictated by the pupil of Gamaliel as he masterfully bent the Greek of Syrian gentlemen to his own purpose.

But the Greek of the Epistles of S. James, S. Peter, and especially Hebrews is very different. Still more so, though in another fashion, is that of the Gospel and the Epistles of S. John. And whereas Paul opened the gate for the Gentiles to enter a Christian Church which inherited succession from Temple and Synagogue, in the books now following we trace the outflow of the Gospel into the wider ocean of the whole world. Jewish traditional symbols of religion are left behind or quite transformed. The faith of Jesus Christ is found to be the fulfilment of the true religion which has always been at work among good men, prophets in Israel, platonists in Hellas, quietists of oriental reverie, the trustful, self-renouncing folk, the ‘ quiet in the land ’ everywhere and when.

In Christ—not the Christ of the Old Testament but according to the deepened and expanding sense of that title among Christians—Judaic and Hellenistic manners and ideals are reconciled and transcended. But that was not effected suddenly. There was a process. Those two ideals were the most potent factors operating in a complex progression. What were the characters of those two ideals ?

S. Paul said that our Lord came in the fullness of time. And that seems contrary to the general rule of historical progress. In art, in religion, the great pure day is the early day. Then, the zenith touched, comes declension : and then, sometimes, when things are at their lowest, there is recovery, renascence.

> Nativity once in the main of light
> Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crowned
> Crooked eclipses ’gainst his glory fight,
> And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.

The large simplicity of Patriarchs, heroic faith of Prophets, all that was past. The formality of the legal, the Jewish period had succeeded the glory of Israel, and century after century had worsened, when at last He came, the fresh Dayspring from on high. Nay, says S. Paul, but when the fullness of the time was come, then God sent His Son : the Jewish ideal.

Then look beyond Israel at the wide world. There are the dim beginnings, rude, savage, stone and iron ages. Out of these, long ago, order—humanity—elaborates, emerges ; especially along the coast of the classic Mediterranean Sea. Imagine the far-descended wisdom, look at the survivals of the art of Egypt, and especially (according to the historic rule of progress) at the earliest art of Egypt : are the marbles of the Parthenon itself so exquisite as the fifth dynasty limestone figures of Hatti and Heti, the royal brother and sister now in the Fitzwilliam Museum ? Our votes perhaps will be variously given. Anyhow, elaboration does go on. There are the wonders of Crete, Hellas, and Ionian Asia. And at last there is Athens with so much more than art, with its deep spiritual excellence, ‘ that many-sided combination of cultivated thought with vigorous deed which formed the Hellenic *idéal*.’ The sentence is Grote’s, whose History will last just because its dry style is suffused with the fire of that Hellenic ideal and breaks off with noble indignation at the point where that is destroyed by the sequent second-best, the Hellenistic movement inaugurated by Alexander of Macedon.

For well or ill Alexander did open a new era ; at least in the West. The old small city states lost their significance. An empire in some respects like the huge eastern empires came into transitory being, then broke up into kingdoms, pointing obscurely to some larger unity of all nations such as even yet has not clearly come to light. One language spread as a medium of communication for the civilized world, a vulgar tongue for the hospitable globe ; and the language was Greek : but a debased Greek. Liberty was diminished. On the whole everything was lowered. Yet perhaps a kind of fullness hitherto unknown was brought about. There is no denying that the changed conditions put in train by Alexander's conquests prepared an area for the world-wide Gospel for which Paul laboured, trusting in the opportunity of the fullness of time.

But when that fullness is thus interpreted, more must be added. Alexander never gathered in his eastern harvest. He conquered some eastern territory, but not the whole East. And what he did conquer was never assimilated. He made a Hellenistic empire and left Hellenistic kingdoms to come after him. But the oriental people remained what they had been. And the essence of that oriental character was not displayed in the pomps of Babylonian or Persian courts. Those eastern potentates had never mastered the hearts of the multitudinous, various, very independent people and tribes of the far North and East. Those still kept their antique freshness. They were like springs of perennial freshness ; indeed still are. Unmoved by armies, courts, material or educational cares, which pervade ordinary civilization and empires and instituted religions in all quarters of the globe alike, these primitive, untutored races have recurrently influenced the ordered life and thought of sophisticated races. And at every renascence of art, manners, philosophy, religion, their naive, pregnant, symbolic puerility—a hoar-old puerility—has given the reviving impulse.

Most obstinately independent of all were the Hebrews. Their pedigree stretched far to nomad ancestors. From Ur of the Chaldees, according to the tradition of the race, their first father Abraham had migrated from the civilization around him, broken away from the ordered empire, and leading his tribe like a family, had journeyed across the desert, skirting the mountains, with flocks and herds, dwelling in tents. So had he entered Canaan and sojourned there, a stranger and a pilgrim, powerful and honoured but with no fixed abode, no parcel of land to call his own, till at last he bought a field wherein to bury his wife, his princess, the royal consort of the royal independent sheikh. Tents, not cities for them : camels and sheep, not the corn and olive and vine of the farmer. They sojourned as pilgrims and strangers, but as the friends of God to Whom all the world belonged—yes all.

There shines another star in the tradition. A movement of nations, a migration of a tribe, some pressure of neighbours constraining them : so perhaps a Greek, a Hellenist might explain the matter. And so does the ancient writing of the Jew, in one verse of its chapter. But side by side another kind of record is placed. God bade, and Abraham obeyed, trusting ; and went forth knowing not whither. The whole tradition is pervaded by the solemn presence, domination, and peaceful comfort of God. And the Name needs as yet no explanation: Name, I have no name, I am that I am. Tell them, *I am* hath sent thee. So God spake to Moses, the first prophet of the nation, as He had spoken to Jacob the third prince of the tribe when he wrestled at the brook and was converted, and raised the Hebrews to be Israel.

This is Israel's tradition. Yes, but how far the primitive tradition ? How far modified by generations of later experience ? That is our question, our criticism ; Hellenists, Alexandrines as we are. Jews cared little for such niceties of history. It is not insignificant that their language should have no tenses, no inflections of the verb to mark past and future, but only a perfect and imperfect in the absolute sense of those terms ; or that it should prefer nouns to verbs, that is permanence to movement, the eternal to the transitory, the one first cause to the series of causes and effects ; or that it should serve better for a proclamation than an argument :—Hear, O Israel : the Lord thy God one Lord ; that is a battle-cry not a creed, as the Greek and English Bibles render it by inserting the verb *is*. Or again observe how vivid in a Hebrew story is the sense of vision :—I saw the Lord in the temple high and lifted up :—I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains :—I will lift up mine eyes to the hills whence cometh my help. Or again how lively is the use of dialogue, the spoken word :—the Lord uncovers the ear of His prophet and speaks to him : angels seen, voices heard, the wind moving on the dark water :—that is how the Jew imagined spirit and conscience. And he shrank not from the grotesque (as we feel it) in such imaginings. What we call plastic art had no charm nor check for him ; his art was in the living word. Balaam's troubled conscience was pictured in the dispute between him and his speaking ass ; which could never have become a vulgar jest to the grave oriental, and which concludes with the opened eye of the soul, the visible messenger from God, and the unmediated bearing of his awful message.

Alexander the Great.

These are Bible stories. Very likely Abraham's herdsmen or David's soldiers talked in ruder fashion round their camp fires. The Bible from which the Jews read them in the synagogue had many centuries of selection and refinement behind it. There may have been writings of an earlier age which were redolent of coarser superstition. But we know no such writings. In the late Jewish period certain extravagances of literature were indeed rife, but these were extravagant embroidery upon the very character which we have been noticing. And it is reasonable to assert that from first to last the Jews as we discern them were dominated by ideas of God, God one, eternal, absolute, living and in Whom they lived, governing and in Whose governance is the essence of history.

All that is very different from the Hellenic and Hellenistic set of ideas. Whether you take Homer, Plato, Aristotle, or Alexander, you find little like this Jewish reverence for God. If they use that name it is generally in the plural. When they move away from the popular mythology of the many Gods they may sometimes use a singular. But they do so in such fashion as invites us to prefer in translation ‘ The god ’ to ‘ God.’ And consider the havoc in the Bible if ‘ the God ’ were read there instead of God. But generally the philosophical term is not God at all, but an abstract, a quality. To Plato the idea of the Good is purer and more vital than what from his pen ‘ God ’ implies.

As for Alexander, it may be difficult to judge how far he was just a militant conqueror, how far a visionary aiming at the renewal, enlightenment, and unity of mankind : but we would never think of his adventures as inspired by his conscience toward God. His visits to the oracles, his trifling with a personal claim to divine ancestry, are not evidence for but contradiction of any such notion.

And that introduces a further consideration. Credit Alexander with his noblest possible dream of a unity, a brotherhood of man. The unity remains imperial. The utmost he could hope to achieve would be an immense empire obedient to the law of Macedon. Now there are paeans in the Hebrew prophets in which something very like that is imagined. So it may seem at first reading. But reflection compels us to interpret differently. They spoke in Hebrew not Greek. These outbursts are not the staple of their doctrine but outbursts of poetic ultimate faith. And what they thus ultimately believe will come to pass is eternal not historical, the rule of God —our fine translation ‘ kingdom ’ is too concrete, too institutional—the rule of God not the empire of Zion. For them the ultimate unity of mankind can only be where the eternal life of each and all the faithful is already preserved, in the absolute life of God. The prophets, and the Jews who inherited the prophets’ faith, keep the real absolute before them : Alexander and the Hellenists who inherited his dream, form a bastard absolute for practical purpose. They are satisfied with a second best.

What is best : what second best ? No doubt the duty to be done at any hour is that best which it is then possible for a person to do. But there will be a difference in possibility according to the idea in a man’s mind, the *idéal* or pattern he has set himself to copy, the ‘ ideal ’ he has projected as truly good to aim at. Thus one will attempt what another will put aside as impossible. And what is doing ? Not surely the same as finishing or succeeding. *Rubet amor difficultatem*, ‘ Love blushes at the word difficulty.’ And the Jew—in his ideal—does not calculate, but hopes for the impossible, because all things are completed in the will of God.

So Plato held when he wrote the *Republic* and said that it mattered not whether such a republic will ever be realized on earth, since it already exists in heaven. Then he was a Hellene. So, it seems, Plato held no longer when he wrote the *Laws*, taking thought for the morrow. Then he was a Hellenist. And John Burnet, that ardent learned Platonist, set the highest value on the *Laws*. And he wished too that Plato had been Alexander's tutor instead of Aristotle. For Plato would have understood Alexander's dream of monarchy and empire and the regeneration of nations thereby, whereas Aristotle did not understand, never ranging in his mind beyond the little city states of Hellas.

Has Burnet judged aright ? Were the city states incompatible with the unity of mankind in God ; or only with the congregating of a great multitude in a human civilization ? *Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine captat*, ' By some inexpressible sweetness his native soil charms a man.' Intense and special friendships, love of country as of a man's own mother, these are realities in the real absolute. The bastard absolute, ' the spurious infinite,' withers these away, and makes its huge but bounded circle dull. Rome was Hellenistic, but not wholly, imitatively so. And the Roman Empire in its earlier growing days did understand this, and absorbed no smaller nations to the extinction of their character. The Roman Empire changed and faded and lived on in the medieval Church. And there again the same kind of degeneration took place, from the real to the artificial absolute. By the City of God S. Augustine meant the divine principle, the pervading and transforming spirit in the world, ' reaching through all ' from end to end. S. Augustine himself after the Donatist controversy (like Plato in the *Laws*) moved away from that vision, and in the following centuries the idea gradually hardened into an institution, large but exclusive, the Roman Empire of religion, claiming universal rights and therefore disappointed in its claim when a new idea arose in the fifteenth century.

That real absolute had been the doctrine of the prophets of Israel. Nor did the Jews ever desert it, though of course they often failed to live and to think in faithful accordance with it. The doctrine was essentially connected with their doctrine of God. The Hellenistic ideal was closely connected with a doctrine of man : a doctrine of man which descended from the Ionic philosophers of Hellas, though it did not possess the whole of the Hellenic mind, and in particular was criticized as incomplete by the Eleatic or Italian Greeks from whom Plato learned so much. This doctrine of man was the setting the mind and experience of man in the centre of the world of thought, trusting the spirit of man to do all that man needs or at least can hope for, and therefore limiting his reach to a horizon. The unseen, unknown, unattainable that lies beyond may be considered the unreal.

This is what has been called rationalism, positivism, humanism, and in its working is civilization. 'Where mortal helps mortal there is god,' said the ancient Roman Law. The other principle, which starts from God as centre and finds no circumference but God, may be distinguished as religion or divinity ; and divinity is the Jewish ideal. Is it unreasonable ? 'Jahweh is a man of war.' If that were but poetry well and good. But was it not fact, faith, and history ? Only part so. Jahweh the Lord of David's hosts, the jealous national patron of Solomon's empire, was not the abiding object of Jewish faith. The Name continues in the Isaianic 'Comfort ye' prophecy, but it stands for far deeper truth of conscience, charity, and thought. 'To your tents, O Israel,' cried the rebels and reformers when Israel left the temple and the palace to return to the simplicity of their nomad ancestors who had worshipped God the nameless Spirit dwelling in wide heaven, in no temple made with hands. Elohim rather than Jahweh designates the one perpetual Saviour of Jewish ideality. And when we meditate on Ezekiel, the early legends of the patriarchs, the latter chapters of the book of Isaiah, yes and the profounder sayings of the Rabbis, we perceive something nearer philosophy than superstition, the most reasonable among the half faiths of the ancient world.

But on the other hand, consider civilization. That is something other than a reasonable faith. Is it not more ? Think of the long history of savage human nature. Refresh memory, discipline reflection, by the twelve volumes of the *Golden Bough*. See magic breeding fear, and fear cruelty. See reason in the form of science casting out fear, evoking beneficence, order, law, mutual goodwill. And see how hard the task is : how near below the surface the old savagery smoulders, quick to break out again if watchful effort be relaxed.

Civilization is reason elaborating charity. And has religion, even reasonable religion, always meant charity ? Is not the Spirit often fierce : blood and fire and vapour of smoke ? The deep Elohim faith comes near the definition of our First Article : 'There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness ; the Maker and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible '—'tis the austerity of the desert or the fens. ' For mortal man to be a friend to mortal man is God.' Which idea is the best : which has contributed most to the theology of the New Testament ? Nay, penetrate more boldly still ; which most resembles the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, the simple gospel preached and believed in Galilee ?

The gospel of civilization : was not that the gospel of the Hellenist rather than the Jew ? If so, I would find it more evidently in Herodotus than Alexander, in the Hellene traveller, friend of all the Gentiles, rather than in the Macedonian conqueror. But why seek in origins for essence ? Anyhow, here is a fine Hellenistic ideal, which (like Elohim for Jews) again and again revives. Did it not revive in the work of a later soldier hero than Alexander ? Do you remember the conclusion of Mommsen's *History of Rome* ?

> We have reached the end of the Roman republic. We have seen it rule for five hundred years in Italy and in the countries of the Mediterranean ; we have seen it brought to ruin in politics and morals, religion and literature, not through outward violence but through inward decay, and thereby making room for the new monarchy of Caesar. There was in the world as Caesar found it much of the noble heritage of past centuries and an infinite abundance of pomp and glory, but little spirit and less taste, and least of all true delight in life. It was indeed an old world ; and even the richly-gifted patriotism of Caesar could not make it young again. The dawn does not return till after the night has fully set in and run its course. But yet with him there came to the sorely harassed peoples on the Mediterranean a tolerable evening after the sultry noon ; and when at length after a long historical night a new day dawned once more for the peoples, and fresh nations in free self-movement commenced their race towards new and higher goals, there were found among them not a few in which the seed sown by Caesar had sprung up, and which were and are indebted to him for their national individuality.

Mommsen's history is a glorification of Caesar. That made him unfair to some good and great men. But his last chapter is, like Grote's last chapter, a betrayal of his very heart, a passion for the absolute. And thus the final paragraph is tinged with melancholy. 'A tolerable evening,' only a second best, a compromise, an average. Is not that the quality of Hellenistic aims ?—aims rather than ideals is the word. And on the whole may we not distinguish the Jewish quality as just the opposite—not an aim but an ideal, nor yet ideals but one single unbounded ideal—One God and all in Him ? No aim : for success matters not, and pure morals do not depend upon a human aim. Extravagances ; grotesque and sometimes unworthy or even worse—well 'where no oxen are the crib is clean, but much increase is by the strength of the ox' : the Jewish absolute, the Hellenistic average. Conclude the comparison with a parable. In Psalm ii a certain verse had lost its true text in corrupt transmission. The Jewish scholars emended apocalyptically : 'Kiss the Son lest he be angry'—absurd ? or sublime ? The Alexandrine translators repeated from earlier verses a safe and sensible maxim. 'Lay hold of instruction.' And perhaps their average wisdom made more for decent morals than the lurid obscurity did. Which would you prefer for worship ?

Yet let us end tolerantly, cautiously, with open mind. We may analyse but cannot perfectly separate. In the New Testament 'Hellenist' means a Greek Jew. And in the New Testament both elements are fused. Galilee was not Hellenistic after the fashion of Alexander or of Alexandria. Nor was Galilee Jewish after the fashion of Jerusalem. Paul was not Galilean. He called himself a thorough Jew, and so he was ; but he was a Hellenistic Jew. His Colossian and Ephesian creed is Hellenistico-Judaic. His church is a Hellenistic, institutional instrument, and he spreads it like Alexander's army to conquer the nations. John leaves all that aside, and harks back to Galilee—no church but the fellowship of disciples : no Christology but the Word made flesh, which dwelt among us, and a new love like to His. Yet John is more absolute than all the Jewish absolute : more Greek with his world-wide gospel than Paul with his Hellenistic Gentile mission.

What has happened ? Why (as Mommsen said) the night has run its course, the dawn—the dayspring from on high has visited the aged earth. ' Behold all things new.' The freedom, the flourish set on youth, what Grote worshipped in young Athens, Mommsen in the growing republic of Rome, and the Jew—did not worship but—thanked God for in his patriarchs, has emerged from shadows and disillusions, out of primal into eternal light.

# XIX

## *THE EPISTLES OF PRIESTHOOD*

'Thought shall be the harder, heart the keener, mood shall be the more, as our might lessens.'—*Song of Maldon.*

THE Epistle to the Hebrews bears no address, no signature. The farewell greeting is from Italy or to Italy or perhaps merely from Italians. The title, which is probably like other titles an addition according to the contents, cannot be taken in its usual sense of Jews of Jerusalem, for the Hellenistic or Alexandrine character of its original recipients is marked throughout the epistle. We may interpret it in our own sense as 'Hebrews indeed; rightful heirs of the promise': and the modern opinion that they were not Jewish Christians at all but purely Gentile seems mistaken, the argument from the Old Testament seems too intimate. But the argument is from the Old Testament at its core, the books of Moses, the Law, and the Tabernacle. The temple is not mentioned. And therefore there is no direct evidence for a date before or after the destruction of the temple by Titus, A.D. 70. Nevertheless, the earlier date that was once fashionable, but is not so now, may be defended. One thing is so clear from the whole epistle that it may be almost stated as a fact: viz. that some hard duty faces the readers, that they are inclined to give up their Christian conversion rather than do this duty, and that a sense of honour is driving them to that apostasy. Their friend tells them that true honour binds the other way. They have given allegiance to Jesus Christ and nothing can excuse lapse from that loyalty. Nor would they doubt, if they really understood what were the Person and redemptive achievement of Jesus Christ. Learn that at last, and you will have strength from Him to do your imminent duty : resolve to do the duty and you will learn the lesson. So writes the steadfast saint to the wavering philosophic-liberals his friends. And he adds : Think of our Lord Jesus as a priest, our high priest, and I can thus help you to understand.

The situation is intense. This duty may be 'unto blood,' may involve martyrdom. The other aspect is honour, inherited ancestral honour. This epistle is no general sermon to a mixed congregation. It is a stern yet affectionate command to a few well-educated comrades. And a probable explanation is that these comrades were of Jewish birth ; have accepted the Christian faith as a reformed Jewish creed ; the war with Rome is beginning ; all Jews are summoned to fight for faith and altar ; they see after all no essential incongruity between the old religion and the new ; they will be loyal to the ancient Church. And now this letter comes forbidding the proposed decision. It is an exhortation and it is a seasonable explication of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, very God and very man.

The Priest for Christians. Priest in this epistle is not presbyter, elder. He is *hiereus*, a sacrificing priest. That is the priesthood of Jesus Christ, and in sacrifice as His work of salvation we shall best win conception of our Lord as priest. In the Greek of this date there is no permanent distinction between *hiereus* and *archiereus*, priest and high priest. In its use of *archiereus* the epistle does point to a pre-eminence of the Lord Jesus. But equal stress is laid upon His community with other men, for the real manhood of our Christ and Priest is the very heart of its appeal. 'Every high priest is taken from among men to stand on the Godward side of men his brothers.' The human name Jesus rings through the letter, the human name which has always asserted its power in times of trouble, and which was being now, at just the time when the epistle was written, brought to the memory of the Christians by the appearance of the earliest written Gospels.

The Emperor Titus.

In those Gospels the divine supremacy comes veiled, as here. In the epistle we open on a poet's vision ; and are shown, as though we stood by the throne of God, the glory issuing from the inner mystery, striking into man's history, touching here and there an eminence and enduing a king or a prophet with its light ; then taking form among men, and making purification of their sins ; then in full circle returning whence He came, but—He now not abstract glory—enriched with manhood, death, and a purpose achieved. It is the mystery of His holy Incarnation. But thus swiftly shown it is withdrawn, and through the rest of the epistle we are on earth (as in the Apocalypse of John, as in the Christian creed) and contemplate a man ‘ learning wisdom through suffering.’

And such a man we follow in the Gospels. And there He chooses a lowly title for Himself which yet includes more than Himself alone, and in the inclusion declares a soaring hope : the Son of Man, i.e. simply ‘ the man,’ the Son of Man Who dies and the Son of Man in Whom all mankind rises. Claiming nothing for Himself His disciples were gradually constrained to yield Him all, till at the Name of Jesus every knee in heaven and earth should bow. But His appeal was not by Christhood or any other title of national tradition. He came as a man to men, and therefore as Only Son from the Father Who is Only God. And He invited men to trust Him as He trusted the Father, and to come with Him to the Father, in Whose presence they would find themselves truly and simply well-beloved sons. That is the message He brought from heaven, as He repeats it again and again in the Gospel according to S. John. And in this epistle, which is the rhetorical prelude to John’s ‘ ultimate utterance,’ it is pictured by the priestly opening of entrance : ‘ a fresh slain living way through the flesh . . . whence He is able to save evermore those who approach through Him to God, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.’

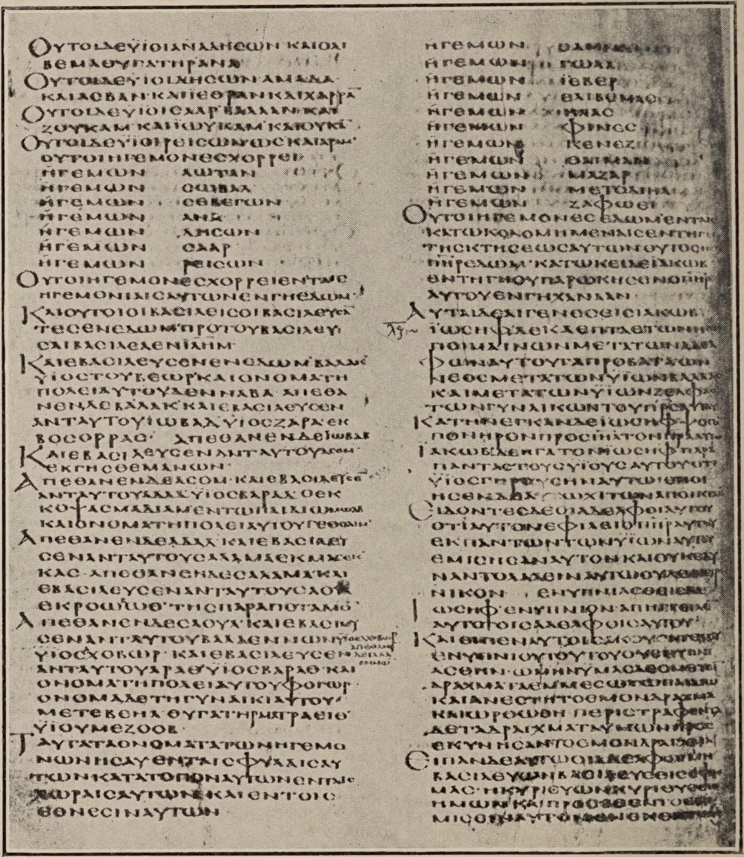
Acts and Paul tell of the young missionary Church, advancing confidently. With Paul’s martyrdom ensues proscription of the Christian faith. With Nero’s death the Julian house passes and fatal disturbances inaugurate the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Judea responds to the impulse of the period. Jerusalem perishes. It is ‘ a last time, a season of extremity ’ : trial, ‘ temptation,’ the ‘ travail pains of the Day of the Lord.’

Three documents in the New Testament witness to the period, 1 Peter, Hebrews, the Apocalypse. The temper and contents of these three books correspond with the circumstances, though nice problems remain for chronological criticism. The Epistle of S. Peter with its warning of fiery trial may be taken as introduction ; A.D. 70 and its tragedy as central point. Dr. Hort in *Judaistic Christianity* sets the scene : ‘ the day of the Lord which the writer to the Hebrews saw drawing nigh had already begun to break in blood and fire when St. John sent his Apocalypse to the Gentile Churches of Asia.’

All three documents are concerned with salvation, that is with rescue, victory, deliverance. It is pictured variously : from Jewish tradition as by Covenant, in platonic idea as sacrament ; suffering and humiliation in appearance, glory and the peace of God within. The Christian view penetrates and unites both. It is effectively moral : ‘ Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.’ That beholding is the aspect of the idea. And it is priestly and sacrificial. The phrase comes from S. John, the treasure house of phrases perfect and absolute. The sacrificial idea is already characteristic of this threefold group. Compare, for distinguishing, S. Paul. In Paul, as in the Hebrew Prophets, the chain of sin, liberty from bondage, freedom to start new life unhindered, is the desire and satisfaction. In this priestly group the stain of sin is the trouble. Cleansing and innocence are the satisfaction : ‘ As babes newborn desire ye the pure intellectual milk' ; study the pure days of His flesh—listen to Jesus the compassionate.

Here is the sacerdotal, sacrificial aim, a yearning aspiration, for holiness rather than for righteousness; for holiness as a cleansing without which there can be no righteousness. Compare Ezekiel with Amos or Isaiah in the Old Testament. And look at the atonement passages in Leviticus (xvii) where the *tabû* of Blood is enlarged to a theology of Sacrifice. 'The blood is the life . . . and God has given it upon the altar to make atonement for your lives.' Some one spoke once of 'the altar with its associated ages of cruelty and suffering.' Suffering : yes. Religion is never genuine unless it meets the facts of life ; only through facts, through 'things' as they are, leads entrance into reality or the eternal. 'This is life eternal, to know the Father as the only God and Jesus Whom He sent' to die. Suffering is a pervasive fact of life. But cruelty : no. The word in Leviticus for 'make atonement or propitiation' is *kipper*, and its ritual significance is found in the Sumerian ritual of Babylon. It is not expiation but cleansing. And that is Ezekiel's expression for sacrificial effect—'wash heart with pure water, cleanse' ; and in the epistle *katharizein*, 'cleanse,' is the recurring equivalent for the atonement phrases of the Old Testament. God gives life upon the altar to cleanse, renew (another favourite idea in Hebrews) our stained and way-worn lives. And complete life is life enriched by death. Read 'life enriched by death' every time 'blood' occurs in Hebrews, and see how reasonably the logic of the passage runs.

Cleanse, renew, complete or perfect. That is the triple chord of this epistle's ritual. Death to S. Paul,



A PAGE OF CODEX ALEXANDRINUS.

in his argumentative paragraphs, is penalty, enemy ; in his activity indeed he laid aside that logic, ‘ to a man of such strong faith death could not have been an enemy.’ In Hebrews death completes the race of life. The last touch of experience in the flesh is the perfecting touch :

the Son made perfect by suffering—souls of just men made perfect.

Just, justice, justify are S. Paul's favourite picturing words. In Hebrews these are less frequent. In Hebrews the idea of Goodness takes the place of Paul's Justice. It is, as Paul knew :—' for a just man hardly . . . yet for a good man one might be even glad to die,' he writes to the Romans—a word of affection ; and in Hebrews justice is superseded by God's good will. Thus Tolstoy writes of Princess Marie in *War and Peace* :

> And what is justice ? . . . The divine will is only guided by its infinite love toward us. . . . All the complicated laws of humanity reduced themselves for her to one clear simple law, the law of love and sacrifice which He has given us, Who, being God, suffered for mankind with love. . . . What had she to do with the justice and injustice of men ? She herself must suffer and love, and she did so.

Thus in theological language sacrifice is deeper than justice. Sacrifice is *hypostasis* sub-stance : it lays great bases for eternity : by sacrifice not by justice the Son is consubstantial with the Father. And so Law is superimposed upon Priesthood : ' For under it hath the people received the law.' In the language of metaphor sacrifice is the *icôn*, the true image or object, justice is the passing shadow.

And that because sacrifice is generous and seeks not satisfaction, for it is itself satisfaction. It gives and does not receive. S. Paul drew part of his doctrine from the analogy of the law court, but he wished Christians never to go to law and he himself lived the sacrificial life. In Hebrews doctrine is illustrated from the analogy of sacrificial custom and sacrifice appears as generosity. It wipes out the account, absolves. It forgives debts, the natural penal consequences of sin even when sin has been forgiven to the reconciled offender : thus our Lord had taught Christians to pray and practise, ‘ forgive our debts.’ And the essence of everyday priesthood, according to the author’s interpretation of the Old Testament, is gifting : ‘ Every high priest, being taken from among men is appointed for men on the Godward side, that he may offer gifts.’ A ‘ royal priesthood ’ says S. Peter in his epistle, he also drawing words and idea from the Old Testament. Certainly S. Paul understood such liberality. And we note here, by the way, that in the New Testament as in all history there are no ‘ boundaries marked out with nicety and precision.’ Exactness obliges, and the scholar finds pleasurable interest in distinction within associated documents. Nothing is more evident in the New Testament than the three schools (as Newman terms the distinction) of Paul and Peter and John. But the New Testament moves onward in massive unity beneath the interplaying currents on the surface—one Lord, one faith. Thus Hebrews elaborates in words, while Paul uses another logic yet lives the life of generosity as a transforming force. In Hebrews and throughout the liturgic group this transforming force is represented as the flower of life :—‘ glory in humiliation,’ the royal style of the Apocalypse, ‘ and here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves . . . a reasonable, holy, lively sacrifice.’

All this is metaphorical. But metaphor, akin to poetry, has its proper function. It reaches beyond the horizon of experience. It emancipates from ‘ ego-centric ’ servitude. What sacrifice once was in fact, in action, in the variety of history, becomes meditative power as later integrated. The magic of words awakes the soul. The right phrase is the real proposition, and prevails the more though it less endures translation and expansion : consider the Lord's Prayer and its paraphrases, or 'one sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world,' and our vain attempts to analyse that phrase historically, dogmatically, or modernly.

In Hebrews the metaphor of vision is perpetual, and links sacrifice with sacrament. The outward and visible is again and again the means of penetration to the eternal : the sight is the way. Think of the many sights this author shows : the ship dropping anchor ; the pilgrim from his tent discerning the minarets of the still distant city his goal ; the race-course or arena with the umpire (who has himself run the course of old) seated on his throne and the cloud of witnesses and the athletes stripping for to-day's contest ; or that 'outside the camp' with its heap of burnt offal and the Friend awaiting the wanderers, ready to conduct them thence to the cheerful family of the new hope.

Every reader will remember a hundred examples. The culmination of all is the crucifixion. What appears is a sordid scene of criminal execution. What that reveals is the entrance of the High Priest glorified with finished sacrifice (the inward and invisible is still a picture in this epistle of an artist) into the presence of God. So in Mark, earliest and least sophisticated Gospel, when the dishonoured victim dies after His dreadful cry, the centurion says, 'Truly this man was the Son of God.' He 'saw the invisible'—saw and believed. A like sacramental picturesque is the very structure of the Apocalypse. On earth ; defeat and martyrdom : within ; the heavenly reality ; armies of the Spirit, the Rider 'conquering and meaning to conquer,' tears wiped away, waters of comfort, exultant hosts that cannot be numbered, God omnipotent directing all to a good end, worship as the fine flower of action and (in reflex correspondence) the prayer of men still absent from felicity, ‘ Amen. Come Lord Jesus.’

The Apocalypse is vague, strange, and lurid in grand ungrammatical Greek ; *e nube in nubem vis*, ‘ cloud darkening into cloud, the strength of storm.’ The Epistle of S. Peter is as plain as Galilee, but the same quality, the scene significant, is there also. ‘ A salvation is ready to be revealed when things are at the worst.’ Then ‘ ye rejoice at the revelation of Jesus Christ : Whom not having seen ye love ; on Whom though now ye see Him not, yet believing ye rejoice with a glorified joy. . . . A fiery trial cometh to prove you . . . the same sufferings are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world . . . blessed are ye ; because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you.’

One point in which this Trial group marks a stage in the development of doctrine is this : the Advent, the Day of the Lord, is recognized as coming now, ‘ while the call goes forth, To-day.’ In the trouble of the times Christ comes. And He comes as Captain—*archêgos* is the title in Hebrews—calling followers : ‘ The Son of God goes forth to war . . . who follows in His train ? ’ As for the final Advent, not even the Son knows its date (so the Lord had said in the days of His flesh) ; leave that at present. ‘ To-day if ye will hear My voice, harden not your hearts . . . Take no thought for the morrow . . . sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.’

S. Paul, as Ephesians proves, had reached a point on this parallel, or even passed beyond. But Ephesians must have been difficult theology for the bankers and tradesmen at Ephesus. Hebrews was addressed to a little circle of scholars and is polished for their reading. But

Hebrews was not so very difficult in its matter, and 1 Peter was plain talk, and the Apocalypse was quite popular in its magnificence. This triplet of documents helped the Church at large to take the step in new theology.

Leonardo da Vinci: The Last Supper.

And in another manner it was connected with the popular notions of the day. In that decade, A.D. 60–70, written Gospels began to appear; perhaps our Mark was one of these; it is legitimate to reckon some of those Lucan ‘narratives’ among them. These narratives partly helped to deflect attention from ‘the last day’ to ‘the days of His flesh,’ partly owed their publication to such an interest already waking. Hope turned back to memory. The Galilean Master reasserted, as He ever will, His sway over a generation who had felt the Spirit and profited by the organization of the Church. A young generation sought ‘realism,’ as youth is apt to do.

But realism is apt to shock. The early Gospels brought a ‘scandal of the Cross’ of an unexpected kind.

The crucifixion was dreadful, and shameful. The Galilean ministry was limited. A carpenter's son, women and fishermen, the narrow pieties of Jewish religion in villages, its bigotry in Jerusalem of the high priests. Is this Man of Nazareth, in this environment, partaking of this homeliness, and crucified between two robbers, the Saviour we adore? Hebrews meets this depression. By a certain tenderness of allusion; the frequent Name Jesus—resembling herein the Apocalypse—the phrase 'in the days of His flesh,' the scene in Gethsemane; the strength and beauty of its story is indicated. The purpose of it all is announced, and the limitations overcome and the steady progress made, are shown heroic. All had to be done by a man, and just that man with all His outward hindrance but with a character growing gradually to an awful perfection: 'He learned obedience through suffering; and being perfected, at last and by help sorely won in prayer, He became the author of salvation' to sinners with whom He utterly sympathized. That sympathy was a stranger acquisition than any superiority to a mean fate. As we read our memory goes back to the heavenly glory from which He descended, the prelude to the biography which the biography itself more and more guarantees as true. And now and then the cloud is broken and the exaltation of the perfect One shines out upon the painful process, the mastering of fate:

> Having then a great high priest, Who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need.

And in the second chapter, near the beginning of the earthly story, a sentence sets the key for all that follows :

> But we behold Him . . . Jesus, crowned for the suffering of death with glory and honour, that by the grace of God He should taste death for every man.

' Crowned for ' not ' crowned because of.' The Greek is perfectly clear—and this author writes excellent Greek : the crowning is previous to the dying : it is the chaplet of the hero not the reward of kingship—kings in the Bible are enthroned not crowned. This criminal went to His death as hero, victor, and lord ' enduring the cross, despising the shame ' in order that God's grace might have its perfect result : thus by glory in humiliation the cross of Christ got cosmic value, the man Jesus was confessed divine.

' Glory in humiliation,' there is the sacramental theory of the person and work of Jesus Christ in this epistle. The lowly state in Galilee, the failures, the insults of the Passion, the bitter cross ; and what might seem to after generations the least credible condition of all, the littleness of the whole incarnate sojourn—all this is (in heavenly measurement) entirely proper ; for divine glory suits not with pomp, but is the essence in the sacrament of humiliation. So our Lord had taught by word as well as by example in the days of His flesh. So S. John will iterate when his Gospel appears—think of ' Now is the Son of Man glorified ' at the Last Supper, when Judas had gone out, and all retreat was cut off, and the Son was deserted, impotent, and doomed. ' Now,' He said, ' the Son of Man is glorified,' and cast care away and strengthened the weak-hearted, and showed how death was a ' going to the Father ' ; yet another aspect of the ubiquitous sacramental principle.

Ubiquitous : in almost every book of the New Testament it appears. Yet not as here. S. Paul resolved no longer to know Christ 'after the flesh.' It is by 'the days of His flesh' that this writer sees his Lord with a right perception as divine :

For that is sacrament, just to see aright, not to ask a boon. Faith in this epistle is neither trust nor hope, in the main. It is seeing the invisible, seeing what really is, and being therewith content—'Lord, mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.'

Is that the usual idea of Sacrament ? Was it so in the day when this epistle was written ? We are led to inquire whether the sacrificial language of this group of documents be not connected with the habitual eucharistic devotion of the later apostolic age. The Apocalypse is a sacramental liturgy throughout. Liturgic rite and hymn go on in heaven as patterns of which divine service on earth is a reflection. The angels about the throne are 'ministering' liturgic messengers, continually sent forth from the dominant peace to serve in the liturgies of martyrdom going on among the saints on earth.

When we pass on further to the Gospel according to S. John we find clear allusion to the Church's habit of sacramental worship. The Gospel concludes with a narrative of the Passion formed on the liturgic pattern. We know that pattern from an early Roman document, the *Epistle of S. Clement*, the earliest witness to this Epistle to the Hebrews, from which Clement quotes at large. Clement was presbyter-bishop of the church in Rome. He wrote to the church at Corinth to compose certain quarrelsome disorders there : on the analogy of the Levitical priesthood he shows the importance of good order, and how highly the presbyters ought to be respected. The epistle (*circa* A.D. 90) nearly attained canonical value : it is included in codex Alexandrinus, the fifth-century manuscript of the New Testament in the British Museum which Cyril the Patriarch of Alexandria gave to King Charles I. It throws light upon the position of the Christian ministry at Rome and Corinth at the end of the apostolic age. And it also shows the sacramental faith of a Churchman such as Clement was. For all through the epistle runs a beautiful conception of the whole world of man and nature as a revealing veil of heavenly truth ; the offerings of the faithful at the eucharistic service are consecrated as sacrifices offered to God ; and the last pages flow into a doxology which resembles the *anaphora* or central eucharistic prayer of the third and fourth-century liturgies of the Eastern Church. And the whole epistle is akin in language and piety to the Epistle to the Hebrews.

But there is one impressive difference. The ‘ offerings ’ in Clement are ‘ sacrifices.’ They correspond to the ‘ sacrifices ’ of doing good and distributing with which God is ‘ well pleased ’ in Hebrews, and to the ‘ alms and oblations ’ of our Prayer Book. But these are minor pieces of devotion in Hebrews, compensations for the abandoned ritual of the Tabernacle. The epistle is in main concerned with one sacrifice, the Sacrifice of Jesus, the one real victim and the one real priest. Clement does not penetrate to the very heart of sacrament ; he interprets nature, man, and God sacramentally, but does not reach the concrete absolute of the one Person, one life enriched by death, in Whom all various instances are realized. The doctrine of Hebrews is far more sublime.

The difference between Clement and Hebrews illustrates what S. Paul tells us in Ephesians about the variety in discipline within the living unity of the apostolic faith. Presbyters, bishops, and people were not co-ordinated in just the same relations at Jerusalem, at Rome, and at Ephesus. Even in the marginals of doctrine some startling variations were possible. The several views of the Advent of Christ in Mark, Paul, John, were not all successive and universal developments, but were held at one and the same time by these or those among the whole multitude who nevertheless were all firm in the one mysterious Hope. It is possible that in Hebrews we catch a glimpse of a peculiarity in sacramental usage which was not illegitimate then, though certainly not general. In the last chapter we read : 'It is good that the heart be stablished by grace ; not by meats, wherein they that occupied themselves were not profited. We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle.' 'They which serve the tabernacle ' is usually understood to mean the Jews. But Dr. Moffatt in the *International Critical Commentary* on Hebrews takes the phrase to mean simply and generally 'the worshippers,' and thinks that the author is disparaging all ' eating and drinking ' in the Christian eucharist; it should be a ritual of word and thought with no use of bread and wine. That is hardly credible. Yet it is not altogether alien to the platonic temper of this epistle, and in S. John the eucharistic meal is traced from the feeding of the five thousand and the breakfast with the risen Lord on the shore of Galilee, not to the institution at the Last Supper ; to 'the poor man's meal of bread and fish' not to the tragic consecration of the broken bread and the outpoured wine. The pictured symbols in the catacombs at Rome agree with S. John : no chalice is represented among those. That indicates a view of the mystery which some preferred to take. It does not prove their denial of historic fact or their exclusion of other persons' views : in Luke we read (yet in a unique form) of the institution and of the first 'celebration' at Emmaus : in his Gospel institution and inauguration are combined.

However, all this warns us to pay attention to the whole of the New Testament and not to be dogmatic and schematic in setting out the evidence for the original ministry and ritual of the Church. More profitably we may notice how practical in each respect was the early rule ; and how obstinately that practical conscience has persisted. The early Liturgies (of Antioch, Alexandria, Rome) scarcely illuminate the obscurities of doctrine around which later controversy has moved. But all are in clear agreement in their two great prayers ; first, that the sacrament may indeed be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ ; finally, that as the rite has been duly performed so the effect may really operate in conduct. And as in those Liturgies so Hebrews concludes with a Blessing, which like a Latin collect sums up tersely the whole doctrine of the epistle and concentrates on a special aim : that the friends of the writer may do their hard duty and enter into the rest of God—as he who writes has done. The passage ends the argument : only greetings follow. It must be read in the Revised Version ; the Authorized Version follows the late generalized text. In the ancient text we see the writer on his knees and hear his heart-wrought antitheses : Jesus—Jesus Christ : His trial—His peace : your duty—our resignation : as Jesus dared and did, so can you and I :

> Now the God of peace, Who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of the eternal covenant, even our

Lord Jesus, make you perfect in all goodness to do His will; working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ: to Whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The one Sacrifice: Jesus united in His will with God and uniting our wills with His own, thitherward. The one Sacrament: Jesus Christ, very man and very God, and all creation shown through Him divine; the glory in His humiliation. The one High Priest: man on the Godward side of man; and each and all men priests through Him.

Jesus of the Epistle to the Hebrews is not the representative, the culminating man. No such vague grandeur blurs the portrait. He is a man; of His particular place and time: but of all captains He is the only one to follow whithersoever He leads.

He is to be imagined supremely as High Priest, the pattern of all Godward help and authority in history, because He learned His own obedience to God perfectly until at last His absolute devotion can find no name but sacrifice, which is the type of all devoted life.

Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper* pictures a historical moment: the Betrayal has just been announced to disciples who really came from Galilee by their Master Who had really walked and talked and won their hearts there, and is at that moment sitting in the window of the room in Jerusalem which looks out on the evening-lighted hills.

But the announcement is of death imminent. The hour breathes of sunset and night and new dawn. The human face in features and character foreshadows inner truth for those who know how to look. What one word is adequate to translate the vision from line and colour into thought? Only Sacrifice. That is the large and lasting impression. The age-old sacrifice and the Lord Jesus the High Priest of it.

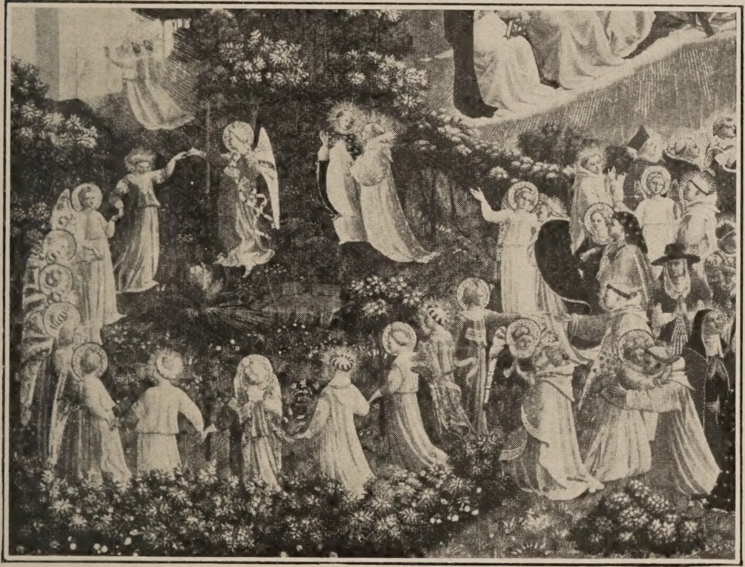
No analogy from art so exactly fits Hebrews in style and sincerity as Leonardo's *Cena*: Florentine art and Alexandrine theology are akin.

## XX

## *THE REVELATION OF S. JOHN THE DIVINE*

A GODLY discipline once ruled in schoolrooms of beginning lessons by reading the Bible together. Children did not always appreciate this privilege. One little boy complained at last that the interesting books of the Bible were not chosen ; and being asked what he wanted, answered Revelation. He showed literary and religious taste. Revelation, The Apocalypse, is written in a strange and splendid language, hardly Greek, all its own, which nevertheless endures translation easily. The theology of the book—Revelation, Apocalypse, Unveiling—wakes imagination, lifts up conscience, answers the soul—deep calling to deep.

What is this book about ? Who wrote it ; when ? why ? If it had been brought to a Roman magistrate before the great fire of Rome in Nero's reign, would he not have said, These Christians mean to burn Rome ? If after the fire, These Christians have burned Rome ? A hundred years ago our ancestors read it and found predictions of Napoleon and his wars. More lately scholars, exact or popular, examine it and recognize historical allusions to events in Nero's reign or in Domitian's. They recall Justin Martyr's testimony to John the Apostle as author, or Dionysius' verdict that the writer of such rude Greek could not be the same as wrote the Gospel according to S. John : and they follow up the inference, with Eusebius, that there were two Johns at Ephesus, John the Apostle and John the Elder. Eusebius welcomed that invention because he disliked what seemed to him the main purpose of the book, viz. to



PARADISE.

describe a crude conception of 'the last things.' To-day we recognize symbolism there; and, as the serious aim of the whole, encouragement to refuse worship to the emperor and consolation for the persecuted champions of resistance.

That little Victorian boy cared for none of these matters. To him the book was obscure, confused, difficult, no doubt. But it was about God and the soul, about deep things beyond the clouds of nature and history ; words and pictures not to be taken literally nor spoiled by explanation ; a vivid salutary dream ; ‘ the voice of many waters.’

A few years later, as a schoolboy, he may have seen Archbishop Benson’s commentary or ‘ Breviate ’ in which the imaginative grandeur is kept inviolate, but order is infused after the manner of an Attic tragedy, as Aeschylus controlled the vague dream of the House of Pelops and its fate. And, if the boy still lives, he will very gladly read Dr. John Oman’s two short books on *The Text of Revelation : Theory and Revised Theory.*

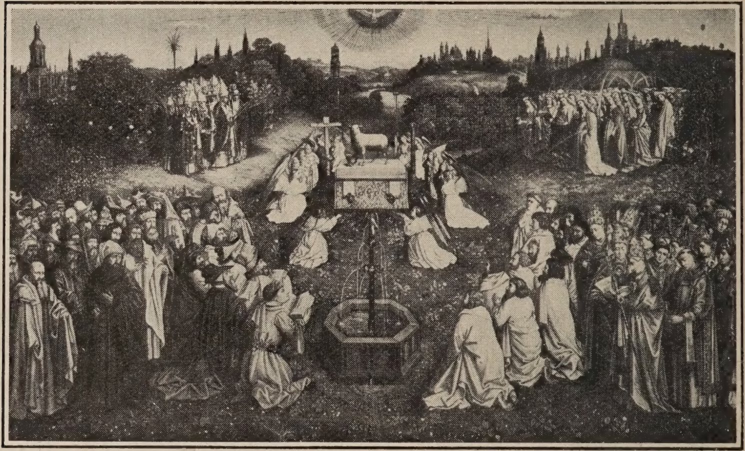
Dr. Oman, tiring of the very latest method of scientific study of the Apocalypse (which discovers affinities of symbol and idea far and wide, in Hermetic, astrological, Egyptian, oriental, as well as in the Hebrew prophetic literature), turned to his own quiet reading of the unadorned text. He found it spiritual but confused : and he caught here and there a glimpse of possible rearrangement which cleared connections. And then he perceived that by shifting the pages of the Greek Testament which he was using he could effect a clear arrangement of the whole, which affected also the significance of the book.

What did this imply ? Surely that the book had been written on sheets that corresponded to Gebhardt’s pages (in whose edition he was reading it), containing the same number of words : and that the sheets had got out of order and had been imperfectly arranged afresh. It was not surprising that every now and then the correspondence was not quite exact, for some connecting links would have to be inserted to make the fresh arrangement run with fair logic. What was more worth noticing was this : the person who made the fresh arrangement had a different idea of the purpose of this revelation from the original author's ; more like the Roman magistrate's or the old-fashioned people who saw a prediction of Napoleon, whereas the original author would have recognized in Archbishop Benson a mind more akin to his own.

However ; Dr. Oman had not quite cleared the problem as yet. Five years later he had simplified, corrected, and confirmed his method with this result : he could sketch the whole plan thus :

> 'The world-rule manifested in worldly civilization, which is sustained by the imperial power,' makes a situation of crisis and impending trial.
>
> Therefore John receives :
>
> I. A first prophetic call : to write to the churches (i–iii).
>
> II. A second prophetic call :
>
> (*a*) To interpret past history (x–xviii).
>
> (*b*) To show the divine principles of government therein discovered as working still and onward to a perfect end (vi, xix–xxii).
>
> And for (*b*) a 'New Prophetic Source' is opened : 'Lo He comes with clouds, and every eye shall see Him' (i. 7, iv–v).
>
> 'We have to conceive our author brooding on this greatest crisis of humanity and on the prophets ; for was not this the closing event of the twelve hundred and sixty (xiii. 18) years of the world-rule under which they had suffered ? . . . The rule of God has two standing enemies upon earth. They are the world-empire and the worldly religious teaching, and the former could have little power to hurt in anything of eternal import but for the support of the latter.'

Therefore this Christian successor to the four great prophets of Israel will have no compromise. His book 'is not mere prediction about the approaching apocalyptic end, but it deals with the principles upon which God governs the present and determines the future.' He sets these forth in 'a ritual of imagery. . . . That he expected the new order to come as a sharp and decisive crisis appears from his expectation that Christ was to come quickly and from the vivid contrast of His rule with the old world-rule. But several elements in the description cannot be harmonized with the view that the second coming is outwardly visible and catastrophic, and the Holy City a territory with geographical frontiers. The descriptions which might be so interpreted seem rather to be the usual symbolisms which are transparencies of principles and not mere pictures of events.'



THE ADORATION OF THE LAMB.

The Messiah's coming had been expected as an event. The prophets had enlarged it to a sublimer mystery. The life of the Lord Jesus had done more : and still He, ' the Living One,' was firmly altering ' the idea of what the event would be. The sudden change came to depend upon the world being made a new creation by a change of heart, and no longer upon the heart being changed by a new creation. . . . Earthly experience is never for John more than struggling shadows cast upon earth by the storm-rent clouds above.'

Part of what Dr. Oman calls ' transparencies ' consist in the mere style of Revelation. If his division of the book be followed it will be observed that the style varies accordingly. In the interpretation of past history (*a*) the symbols are like the corresponding parts of the book of Daniel, rough, bizarre ; and this division of Revelation is somewhat repellent, many a modern reader turns away and reads no more when he finds himself engulfed in this unintelligible slough. The author took that risk. It indicates to those who know Daniel and the contrasts in that apocalyptic dream, the contrast in this book which will be understood when the full reality of the last division opens. For in (*b*) the principles of government discovered in the past are set out in prophetic style, like Isaiah rather than Daniel. And finally, the working of these principles onward to a perfect end is depicted in the sheer beauty of the primitive Gospel.

After twice or thrice reading Revelation through in Dr. Oman's order few will be inclined to return to the printed order of the Bible, whether or no his conjectured process in the shaping of the book convinces. And at any rate a necessity is left upon the mind of interpreting henceforward this profound apocalypse profoundly. Revelation is a prelude to the ultra-platonic Gospel according to John. Were there two Johns ? Was one and the same John author of both books ? Who was that John ? These are the enigmas of criticism ; far as yet from being solved. But in peculiar and essential theology the two books are more and more plainly seen to be indissolubly conjunct.

‘ In the world ye shall have tribulation : be of good cheer for I have overcome the world.’ That is the assurance of both Revelation and Gospel : and it is in the absoluteness of this superabundant confidence that these two books are distinguished from all others. God rules : Jesus lives : the victory is already won ; for the heavenly sphere is the real whole. The world is evil but it shall be changed ; and at every present place and time that future may be realized; for present and future are transparencies of the Eternal.

‘ I think we agree,’ said one friend to another, ‘ but you are a hopeless idealist, your aspirations are irrealisable. You want from men faith, honour, fidelity to truth. . . . What makes you dangerous is your unwarrantable belief that your desire may be realised.’ There is John the Divine, the Visionary.

## XXI

## *THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO S. JOHN*

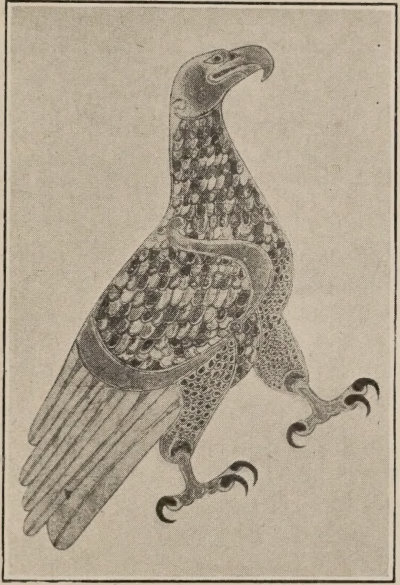
THE Gospel according to John—that is the earliest form of the title, brief, patient of large and free interpretation. With this liberally critical title tradition begins. In the latter half of the second century it has gained more definite form : John the Apostle was the author. Later still he is accepted as the actual writer. Before that was plainly asserted a more important quality had been observed : this Gospel was composed at the end of the apostolic age, it differs from the earlier Gospels in being ' the spiritual Gospel ' ; it is the crown—or better the issue into all the world and all ages—of all the theology of the New Testament.

Let us look for ourselves at its contents. A prologue introduces the narrative. The opening sentence carries us back to Genesis ' in the beginning,' and the recurring ' God said ' of Genesis tells in what chief sense we are to understand that ancient term of all philosophies, ' The Word.' That term pervades this prologue. It has already come to us in the archaizing Johannine scripture, the Apocalypse, and we hear it in the epistle, 1 John, in a prologue which appears like a first sketch of the Gospel prologue. It will not be repeated in the Gospel narrative, but the idea of it explains the narrative ; which is indeed the story of the Word made flesh and His sojourn with His disciples. The abstraction of the idea passes into concrete fact with the introduction of John the Baptist, the herald of the sojourn and witness to its wonder.

In the earlier Gospels the ministry of our Lord begins after the Baptist was put in prison by Herod. In this Gospel we read of a Galilean ministry between the Baptism and John's imprisonment. The first notable incident is the first of the seven signs which are peculiar to this Gospel, the water and the wine at Cana. Sign is the Johannine word, *semeîon* in Greek, symbol or sacrament is implied. In the translation of this word we have our first warning that it will be necessary to read this Gospel in the Revised Version. Of what is the incident a sign ? What glory did the Redeemer thus manifest ? Obviously that attribute of creative power which is announced in the Prologue. But not less importantly that intimate affection of the Master with His disciples which is the theme of the whole history and from which all the theology of this Gospel grows. At a village feast with His mother and His friends our Lord works a kindly remedy for a homely embarrassment, and thus kindly, for His kith and kin, He 'manifested His glory ; and His disciples trusted Him.' It will be found that 'trust' is the best rendering of the Greek verb throughout this Gospel. In one place it is necessary, and everywhere the familiar word suits better than the more technical : the technically religious noun 'faith' never occurs.

Further ; there is a certain undertone of significance in all these Johannine 'signs' which distinguishes them from the 'mighty works' of the earlier Gospels, a contemporary and foreshadowing allusive quality. Who does not muse upon the wine becoming the sacred Blood in the Eucharist, when he reads the tale of Cana ? That was part of what S. Clement of Alexandria meant when he styled this the 'spiritual Gospel.'

So it is again in what presently follows : the visit to Jerusalem and the conversation with Nicodemus. Quite clearly there is allusion to Baptism there. The 'we' in 'we speak that we do know' seems to carry us from the immediate place and time into the Church at Ephesus. Again and again we recognize three *strata* in these Johannine narratives: the immediate place and time, the interests, hopes, and fears of the evangelist and his fellow churchmen, and the interests of the generations yet to come of those who inherit the apostolic Gospel. Baptism is indeed new birth. Already the reality was hardening into a dogma, losing mystery and therefore reality through familiar repetition. In our Lord's dialogue with this, elsewhere unknown, Johannine disciple, who yet reminds us curiously of Gamaliel in Acts, the mystery and reality, the homely grandeur, of the new birth is recovered.


'HERALD OF MYSTERY, EAGLE OF OUR LORD.'

A Passover is recorded. In the earlier Gospels only one Passover (after the boyhood's visit in Luke) is noticed, the end of the one year's ministry which those evangelists only know. In this Gospel there are three milestones in the advancing history, like the three Christmasses in Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. At this first Passover the Lord cleanses the Temple, an act which the early evangelists put into the narrative of the Passover of the Passion.

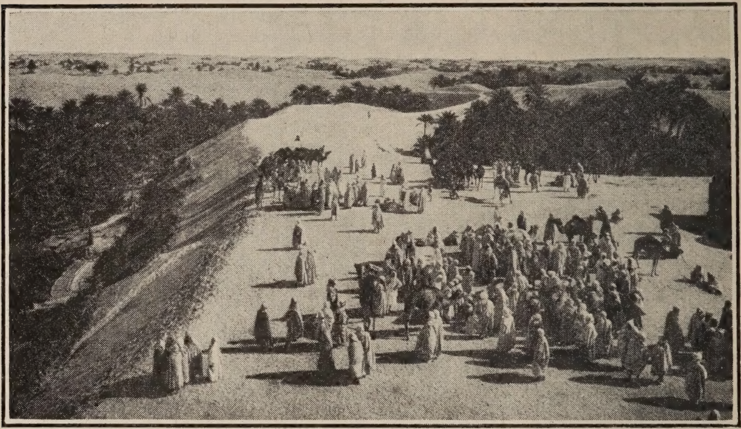
And at this point the Baptist once again comes forward. It seems as though the evangelist was concerned to correct a misapprehension about the Baptist. Hardly ever does he bring him forward without something said to show that for all his greatness he was quite subordinate to the Lord Jesus. But it is for all his greatness. In no Gospel does the Baptist shine so bright as in this. Here, we have his princely magnanimity : 'This my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.' Turn on a page and read with this his princely epitaph : 'And Jesus went unto the place where John was at the first baptizing ; and there He abode. And many came unto Him ; and they said, John indeed did no sign : but all things whatsoever John spake of this man were true. And many believed on Him there.'

Then comes the journey through Samaria and the conversation with the woman. How real it reads, how tender, how kind. And then to what large theology it grows. 'But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth : for such doth the Father seek to be His worshippers. God is spirit : and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.'

This is theology. In the earlier Gospels our Lord says little about 'God.' He is content to speak of 'the Father.' But in the Lord's Prayer He says 'Our Father, which art in heaven,' and He introduces the first two words by 'when ye pray,' hints of some deeper—as we might dare to put it, intellectual—thought. Such hints are accentuated, interpreted, elaborated in John.

We notice also ‘ and now is ’ ; a characteristic touch. For that transcendence of succession in time, that bringing of future dates into a present (or eternal) Here and Now, is the very centre of this Gospel’s idea. Passing the healing of the nobleman’s son and coming again to Jerusalem at ‘ the feast ’ in chapter v we find this applied to the great subject of life and death and judgement. ‘ Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He also to the Son to have life in Himself ; and He gave Him authority to execute judgement, because He is the Son of man.’

‘ Because He is the Son of man.’ The traditionally religious title ‘ Son of God ’ is quoted and set aside for the claim which seems less but to our Lord is far larger ; and that explains the startling answer to the woman of Samaria’s conventional confession about ‘ Messiah (which is the Christ) ’ : ‘ Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He ’—a claim, an ‘ authority,’ but for participation, not exclusion. And the meaning of ‘ and now is ’ cannot be extenuated. Preceding sentences insist upon its literality : ‘ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and trusteth Him that sent Me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgement, but hath passed out of death into life.’ Judgement is here and now. The conception is of the Greek *crisis* ‘ distinction,’ not the ‘ vindication ’ of the Hebrew. Where and whenever the ‘ Light of the world ’ shines men come to or turn from the light, and that is judgement. Eternal life is here and



Multitudes Gathering.

now. Physical death is no interruption to that life. To raise a dead body from the grave is a very little matter as compared with this creation (or renewal) of the life eternal. The one may be a 'sign,' the other is reality and is in all times and places continuously going on.

Yet the sign impresses many. Therefore our Lord, as though remembering the new wine and old wine skins, or the goodman who brings out of his treasury the old symbols as well as the new theology, adds what contradicts the assurance just given—for in symbols, signs, and human speech the meaning of things said, the sincerity of truth, is what matters in our meantime of truth : 'Marvel not at this : for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tomb shall hear His voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgement.'

In chapter vi the turning point of this divine epic is reached with the Feeding of the Five Thousand. In

Mark this is a turning point, but S. Mark himself hardly seems to have recognized the How and Why. In Luke approach is made to explanation, for the confession of S. Peter follows directly upon the miracle, intermediate incidents being removed. In this Gospel the explanation is plainly given. 'When the people saw the sign which He did, they said, This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world. Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him a king withdrew again into the mountain Himself alone.' The day of discourse ended with a Messianic feast : no pomp or plenty of meat and drink, but great spiritual excitement. What S. Peter will presently utter, these five thousand already signify.

And then John adds the discourse of the next day about the bread of life. I am that bread, the Lord declares. The eating of it will be no dainty feeding. It will be a tragic sharing in My very act and passion and being. But it will be the true life eternal. And without such courage, such devotion, there can be no possession of life eternal. Something like that we read in the Synoptists. 'Whoso will save his life (or soul) shall lose it, whoso will lose his soul for My sake and My good-tidings he shall find it.' So now He says : 'Yea, and the bread which I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life . . . as the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father ; so he that eateth Me, he also shall live because of Me . . . he that eateth this bread shall live for ever.'

And here again there is undoubtedly reference to the eucharistic devotion of the Church. From the later books of the New Testament and from the writings of the earliest Fathers of the Church we see how the accent of this rite shifted from, ‘ Ye do show the Lord’s death until He come,’ to ‘ Give us this day our daily bread,’ as the main purpose ; from apocalyptic hope to the sustenance of the soul. The quieter devotion was apt to become less intense, even selfish, even unbrotherly. In this discourse the Lord Jesus, as in 1 John the Apostle, rouses the worshippers to renew enthusiasm and to be sincere.

The discourse was enthusiastic and austere—hard sayings. ‘ Upon this many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Jesus said therefore unto the Twelve, Would ye also go away ? Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go ? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and know that Thou art the Holy One of God. Jesus answered them, Did I not choose you the Twelve, and one of you is a devil ? Now He spake of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he it was that should betray Him, being one of the Twelve.’

This corresponds to S. Peter’s confession at Caesarea Philippi. The Authorized Version makes the equivalence plainer by inserting, Thou art the Christ. But herein we notice another reason for preferring the Revised Version in reading John. The true text matters in this Gospel so much, and the Revised Version follows the true ancient text. A noticeable thing in John is the quasi-avoidance or correction of the title ‘ Christ.’ That title comes from Jewish tradition. We have almost forgotten its origin and its originally national limitations. When this Gospel was composed for the wide world it was not so. Throughout the evangelist is feeling after some larger term unconnected with political associations. At the close of his work he found the exact expression : 'The Word . . . with God . . . was God . . . and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.'

Our Lord answering Peter foretells the Cross and Passion, as in the Synoptists. But this is done in the thoughtful, perhaps only half historical, manner of John. The 'Get thee behind Me, Satan,' to S. Peter, is not repeated, but 'and one of you is a devil' is recorded of Judas Iscariot.

And from this point 'the days begin to be fulfilled that He should be received up' : and, as in Luke, the interval is of large content. As in Luke, 'He steadfastly sets His face to go to Jerusalem.' Till the Feeding of the Five Thousand there have been visits to Jerusalem, but the constant scene has been the serene home-country of Galilee. From this point there are returns to Galilee, but the main development of the story is in Jerusalem.

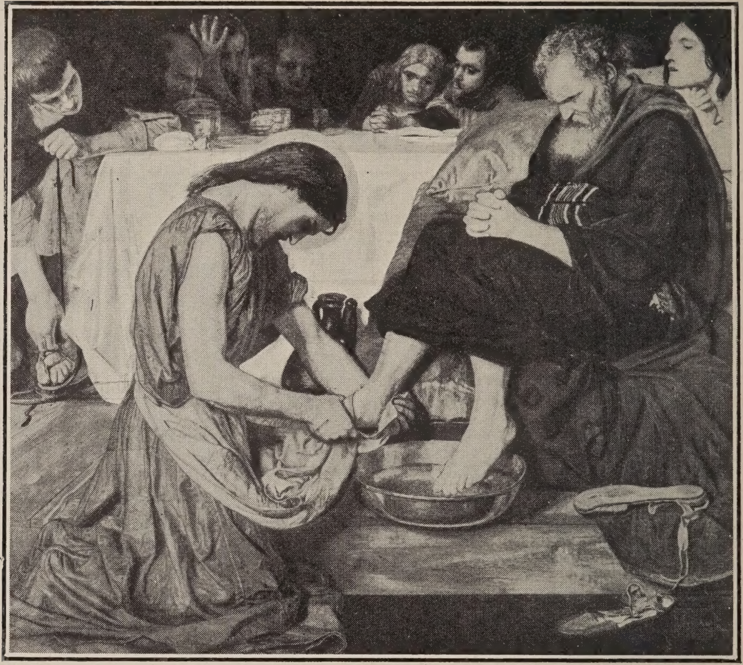
And serenity passes into strife. In the discussions with the Jews we almost fear to catch a tone of resentment in our Lord's declarations of the truth. It is not so. Read deliberately, with due awe, His words are utterly loving : but He yearns, He pities, He recognizes day by day more certainly the hopelessness, which is the Father's will. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority (John's paradoxical iterated term) to become sons of the Father, Whose only Son He was. And among those willing ones were certain Greeks who came to the Feast, and came to Philip, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. It does not appear that our Lord let them see Him in the way they desired. The world-wide Gospel was to enter hearts by a more penetrating, universal influence ; not by the mirror of sight but by the reality of the Spirit.' Greeks desired Him. The Jews in the bigoted, cruel city were suspicious, hostile, ominously threatening. And as the storm gathered, so the little band of countrymen, His friends the Master called them now, came closer together round Him : grew deeper and more intelligent in their affection, perception, devotion, love ; till at last heart could really speak to heart, and from the memories of Galilee the theology of the Last Supper might spring.

All this was introduced by the Raising of Lazarus at Bethany. That work—interpretative of realities concerning death and life—is followed by the triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, the point at which all four evangelists join company again after divergence.

The divergence is far and free. If a student will draw a map and mark thereon our Lord's movements by three lines in three colours according as those movements are represented in Mark, Luke, and John, he will realize how difficult it is to defend the historical exactness of all three accounts. Such defence is not required. Luke in his use of documentary and oral sources would confess the uncertainty of the historian's choice in details and tracts of narrative. John would perhaps confess that he criticized, selected, and arranged on other principles than a historian. The Raising of Lazarus was doubtless drawn from the large fluid mass of tradition. The other evangelists put it aside. They judged that the entrance into Jerusalem was otherwise led up to. John selected and used this piece of the tradition, adapting it to the purpose of his whole design.

What does the Raising of Lazarus mean in this Gospel ? When Martha met the Master and said, Lord, if Thou hadst been here . . . the Lord answered, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha answered that she did indeed confess the Jewish faith. He will rise : at the last day—so far off, so mysterious, so little consolation there. Then ‘ Jesus saith unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life : he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die for all eternity.’ I *am* : that is assurance here and now. *I* am : that is personal, the assurance of a loved and trusted Master’s presence. The raising of the dead man follows : a sight of horror ; a transitory happiness restored. That was ‘ because of the multitude.’ The peace of the sisters had a deeper source. At the moment perhaps they felt it, as we feel the absolute truth of this Gospel’s narrative when we read it. A few days later the disciples were to learn more of what that deep, reasonable source was, as we do when year after year we study this Gospel and supersede criticism by theology.

The last evening came, in John the evening before, not the evening of the Passover : it is no Jewish rite, it is the inauguration of the Sacrifice which was and is and ever shall be. The evangelist lingers not to repeat what might be read in the Gospels already published. He tells of the washing of the disciples’ feet by their Master and Lord, symbol of that new commandment of love like His own love which makes them friends and sacrifices life for friendship. Three times He essays to turn His dear friend Judas from his crime. He fails. Judas goes out into the night, to do his dreadful business. All escape is cut off. Humiliation and the cross are certain. When therefore he was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of man glorified, and casting away care He set Himself to cheer the anxious disciples with the supreme Johannine



‘The Pilot of the Galilean Lake.’

theology. I am going away, He tells them. Yes we part. But going is coming, for I go to the Father, and that is not like a parting in space and time ; it is progress within the Father’s universal house of life. There are many ‘ mansions ’ in that house, many spheres within spheres of more and more intimate communion. We have been together in Galilee where we walked and talked together, in the mansion of the senses. That is all over now. No more hearing, touching, seeing in that way. But we learned to know one another by that way in a more dear and near and lasting way, the understanding of our hearts. Thus—let memory help you to follow My meaning—we began to enter the mansion of the Spirit, and now, in a little while, we shall be united in that mansion closer than ever before, as close and in like kind as I am united with the Father. I go. The Spirit comes. He is the Comforter. He is My very present self, no longer side by side but I in you and you in Me and all in the Father, all united into one.

And then the Lord ends as He began with the new friendship, telling them that perhaps they may not fully understand these truths at once, but the Spirit (Who is memory, experience, and history and conscience) will make them understand better and better by degrees. And meanwhile, He promises them, that if only they go on loving one another all will be always well. 'Peace I leave with you ; My peace I give unto you : not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid.'

The preface is complete. The high-priestly prayer is said. The garden is reached. The arrest is made. The Passion and the Death ensue. The narrative is a Liturgy : the action is the Sacrifice.

Sacrifice cannot be defined. It is a word shot at a mark : something understood, for it is the essential spring of humanity. When man became man, by whatever obscure or glorious elaboration of divine plan or nature's process, sympathy with this mystery of sacrifice was his distinctive faculty. And so it emerges anew in the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In all four Gospels the narrative of the Passion fills the largest space, is most solemn, is the evident goal and meaning of the whole. We read, and recognize this, and cannot tell why it so is. In John we meet an evangelist who read and heard and meditated as we do, and found the way to explain, so far as his readers become, in the discipline of advancing and waning years, capable of following his vision. In John, more decidedly than in his predecessors, the Lord Jesus makes no personal claim, to be Christ or God or any great one. He claims nothing for Himself, and His disciples find themselves obliged to yield Him all. In John, however, He does make certain immense claims of peculiar union with the Father (Who is, He says, the only God). But each of these claims is as it were cancelled by the promise which follows as its complement : Trust Me, come with Me to the Father, and you shall be in Him as I am ; just as I am.

He repudiates epithets like 'peculiar,' 'unique' : He is divine by inclusion not by separateness. And yet 'No man cometh to the Father but by Me.' He is supreme. He is for ever. And though we cannot express our conscious understanding of the paradox, we do accept it. And the Johannine narrative of the Death and Passion shows us why. John shows it as the Sacrifice, the meeting point of deity and humanity ; the completion : one 'full, perfect, and sufficient satisfaction for the sin of the whole world.'

The story is told with much characteristically Johannine idiosyncrasy. Its beauty, power, richness, naturalness are inimitable. No one while he reads it is assailed by questions of its factual accuracy. Nor are we inclined to consider from that point of view the concluding chapter, the fishing—' I go a-fishing,' said Simon Peter : and we with you, answer his brothers of the Lake—the meeting with the Lord in Galilee, the reconciliation of

Peter, the draught of fishes, the veiled destiny of the disciple whom Jesus loved.

After all that was so deeply said in the discourse of the Last Supper, this carries us again into the mansion of the senses. Ah, yes. A master of his craft like the artist of this Gospel cares not for that kind of inconsistency. The mansion of the senses ? Rather the demesne of symbol. But chiefly, the most powerful and delightful way of launching this fresh Gospel on the wide world. All here is light and life, and no regret but confidence towards a future, the future as youth faces it, at last in very deed ‘ the dayspring from on high.’

Here and now : an eternal present is the theology of this Gospel. To know the Father as the only God, and Jesus Christ Whom He sent, is eternal life. And the frequency of words like ‘ abide ’ is to be considered. But the Greek of the verse just quoted does not imply sudden, inexplicable, passive knowledge, but continuous effort, learning to know. And the profoundly simple philosophy of the Gospel is just the continuous movement of natural affection towards an inward personal love of friends with friends which issues at last into such unity as all one with the unity of the Father and Son in the one Godhead. Therefore the story in this Gospel is eminently human, homely, natural, more not less so than in the earlier Gospels. This is the Gospel of *Ecce Homo* : ‘ Jesus therefore came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple garment. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man ! ’ No incident of the trial is more familiar to most people than this. And, if considered, our recollections of traits of character—words, acts, habits—of our Lord and the men and women round Him, will be generally found to come from this Gospel.

Yet a certain complement to this is also noticeable. The other characters catch their interest from being with Jesus. His presence brings the shadows into vivid existence. And there is always a felt and effectual but veiled ‘ beyond ’ in Him, a quietude and energy, an effluence and influence : of this, too, the others catch something in themselves from Him. All the figures are alive indeed and real, yet ‘ less life-like than love-like.’ And this procession inwards culminates finally on the cross, but anticipatorily at the Last Supper, when in the conversation the Master, homely and intimate, begins to unclothe Himself of the garments of the senses and to put on the robes of abstract majesty with which the Eternal Word is introduced in the Prologue : ‘ I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.’ It is this perception of majesty revealed which remains in the Epilogue of the fishing and the eucharistic breakfast on the sea of Tiberias, and intertwines that tale with the philosophical discourse.

And now what is this Gospel ? Who wrote it ? When ? Does it indeed tell us the mind of our Lord Jesus ? What is its guarantee ? If we would seek answers to these questions we should first ask ourselves another : Do I believe indeed that Jesus is still living ? Unless we can firmly answer Yes to that question we shall never enjoy the assurance of this Gospel’s theology ; and we shall always be tossed anxiously in the chaos of its criticism.

To go scientifically into its criticism will not be desired by Every Man. But will Every Man listen patiently though judicially to a plain though conjectural tale ?

Towards the close of the first century John the Apostle and one of the sons of Zebedee, after adventures dimly adumbrated but including a vision in the island of Patmos, entered upon a quiet episcopate in Ephesus.

He called himself The Presbyter, not needing to assert his dignity. He taught a Gospel in which he repeated acts and especially words of his Lord which he, the young disciple of the Galilean group, had taken specially to his heart in Galilean days. These were not what the other disciples with their Judaic predilections quite understood or chiefly remembered. But these answered the young man's questionings and roused hopes in his conscience. For years after the crucifixion he had shared these ideas with his still living Lord, and the experience of life had enabled him to understand more deeply and more clearly. From his still living Lord, but living in the Spirit, as the Spirit, his memories became present Comfort, guiding him into all the Truth.

At Ephesus and in his diocese around he taught such a Gospel as that. He had learned a modest Greek, of small vocabulary and short, clear sentences, a Greek which he imparted to a disciple of his own, a youthful convert, a secretary. As secretary that youth wrote his bishop's Pastorals, of which we have three remaining, the three 'Catholic Epistles of S. John.' So S. John taught his Gospel, week by week telling the Asian converts the story of the Lord Jesus Christ in a manner which differed much from the manner which was becoming defined and canonical in the active European region of the Church.

With the close of the century the death of the Apostle drew near. The secretary composed a Gospel from his bishop's oral lessons, as he had composed Pastorals from his instructions. He composed with freedom, using all the material he found useful, our three Synoptic Gospels especially, and shaping the narrative and his master's and his own reflections upon it in such a way as served to illuminate the problems of his own place and time. He put his own master into the story, with reverent affection, designating him ‘ the disciple whom Jesus loved.’ Once or twice he appealed directly to his authority as eyewitness for particular statements, as for the record of the piercing of the Saviour’s side upon the cross.

He brought the finished book to his master before he died, and his master, S. John the Bishop, the Apostle, gave his approval and called the Ephesian Elders to join therein. The Apostle recognized the startling originality of the young evangelist’s composition, but he recognized its truth. For he had learned the transitory quality of all expression of true truth : he appreciated the inadequacy as well as the divine potency of honest language : he recognized vision, for he had seen a vision himself, and knew that his disciple had written as he had written, with judgement and scholarship and critical scruple indeed, but ultimately because the Spirit of Jesus had shown the onward-sweeping story to him, shown it just so, and he had written as he must write. He knew too how far beyond books the ever-growing life of the living Jesus went : books might be infinitely multiplied and yet could never comprehend the eternal limit : and the evangelist knew that too, and also knew that for all his own pains this book was in very truth his master’s, and that he had honestly tried to keep it so—he my master really wrote it :

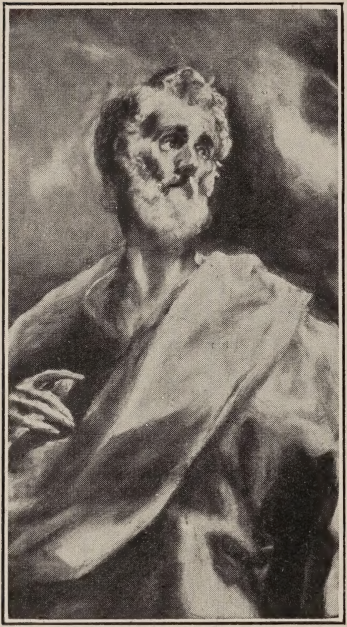
‘ This is the disciple which beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things : and we know that his witness is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written.’

## XXII

## *THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES*

THE Catholic or Ecclesiastical Epistles : compare the title given to The Wisdom of Sirach in the Alexandrine Old Testament, Ecclesiasticus. These seven Epistles : James ; 1 and 2 Peter ; 1, 2, and 3 John ; Jude, are an appendix to Acts in the second volume of the early manuscripts of the New Testament. Their admission to the Canon was, for most of them, late, for 2 Peter and Jude long disputed, for James ambiguous. A presumption of late apostolic character affects them all.

They are of the nature of Pastorals. In their Pastorals the bishops warned their flocks against errors in faith or conduct which were in vogue, and stirred up the wills of the faithful to sincerity and effort. In 1 John the Apostle meets the early form of what grew in the second century to the widespread and influential heresy of the Gnostics. That heresy took manifold strange forms. ‘ The bubbling many-coloured theosophies of the Gnostics ’ is Moffatt's picturesque and accurate description. A clever epigrammatic list of these ‘ arch-heresies, which made such a noise in their day,’ with their distinctive fantasies elucidated by terse comparison with their ‘ descendants yet on earth ’ existing, may be read in Lytton's *Caxtons*, part viii, chapter vi. What S. John was concerned about was the ‘ docetic ’ strain, their reduction of the Incarnation to a merely ‘ seeming ’ assumption of manhood by the Word. ‘ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already.' There is the danger: that a mistaken reverence should dissolve the real manhood of the man Jesus to increase the miracle of His deity: as though the Redeemer were no man who 'dwelt among us,' but a vaguely divine sojourner in disguise; who did not suffer and die as men do, nor rise and overcome the world by His real obedience to the Father and His real love to His mortal brethren.



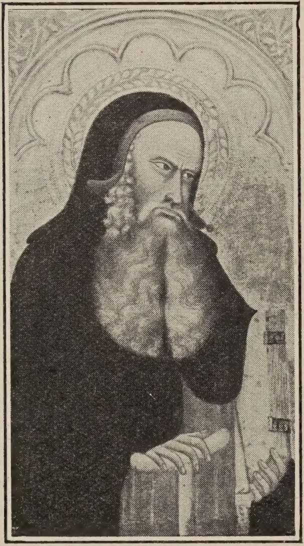
El Greco's S. Peter.

But such a passage as that just quoted is rare in the epistle. The Apostle confirms true faith more gladly than he combats heresy. By declaring the true manhood he displays the infinite deity. And in so doing he elicits the utmost power and hope and comfort of the Christian faith in Christian practice. The Church is in his mind the 'fellowship,' the pervasive concent and influence of a loving brotherhood, in which all is practical; not words but deeds ; virtues of daily use and wont, and therefore apt to rise to heroic devotion ; innocence, not asserted in defiance of the fact of sins, but continually renewed till ‘ the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin ’ : ‘ Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him even as He is. And every one that hath this hope set on Him purifieth himself even as He is pure.’

Christianity is the working out of this ideal into reality. That is the art of ethics ; and this epistle is the first treatise on Christian ethics. And as the art of ethics always rests upon eternal principle or idea, so in this treatise we study the metaphysics of love. ‘ Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God : and such we are . . . we have passed . . . out of death into life, because we love the brethren. . . . God is love . . . we love, because He first loved us . . . for love is of God.’

As yet ‘ the whole world lieth in evil,’ but the fellowship of the brethren with their Master in God shall penetrate and change the world. For ‘ Jesus Christ the righteous is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.’

If 1 John be the first treatise on Christian ethics the Epistle of S. James may be imagined as the second. Towards the end of the apostolic century a presbyter-bishop is here seen meditating a pastoral letter, or a set of sermons. He has writing tablets in hand and jots down headings and phrases that occur to him as expressive. We read notes of discourse, not a finished composition. He is a scholarly thinker : talks good Hellenistic Greek, packs thought close and pregnant. He is plain and practical, on guard against all the trickery of verbiage ; no faith without works for him and his. The full Christian Faith is taken for granted : in delivering his discourse he will no doubt have plenty to say about his Master Jesus Christ : but it is not necessary to write that out in these notes. One of his perfect phrases, however, does come to him and is set down—in his Greek it is more remarkable than translation can represent—'The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ—what glory!' It is a warmth from the intellectual heart, and it burns forth from (what is very dear to him) the sense of Christian *gentilezza*, the kindred dignity of rich and poor. Shrewd and plain as he seems he has the Gospel fire in him ; sometimes indignant, often tender, extravagant in hope. And underlying all his plain translation for the people the philosophic reverie of his own nature flows, now and again emerging in a phrase of rare attraction. Such is notably that 'face of birth' in the first chapter : 'If any one is a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding the face of his original birth in a mirror : for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.' The face of his 'genesis' is the Greek. The allusion is to the hymn of creation in Genesis, to man's creation in the image of God. It is Plato's and Wordsworth's 'recollec-


'JAMES, A SERVANT OF GOD.'

tion.' It is our 'ideal.' A picture phrase this of the genuine, not facile nor superstitious, picturing kind. The 'law' but of liberty 'royal and perfect' follows, and then like Micah, like the Sermon on the Mount, 'Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.'

This is an imaginary account of the epistle. Other accounts and various have been offered. All are more or less imaginary. The traditional account, that this is a letter from S. James the brother of the Lord, first Bishop of Jerusalem, is not genuinely traditional. The earliest churchmen did not all receive the epistle into their Bible. Perhaps they knew, what some critics now guess, that this 'James the Servant' was not the apostolic James. When the epistle was admitted, it was no doubt admitted in virtue of that claim. After the earliest stage of criticism, a more ecclesiastical criticism always applied the test of apostolic authorship; but in this epistle itself no such appeal is to be found.

To that desire for nothing but of apostolic authorship; and for every remnant of apostolic authorship, we probably owe the inclusion in our New Testament of the very brief letters 2 and 3 John; one addressed to an 'elect lady and her children,' a very pretty piece; the other to 'Gaius the beloved,' a good hospitable Christian, dwelling between two neighbours, 'Diotrephes who loveth to have pre-eminence, prating and forbidding,' and Demetrius who 'hath the witness of all men and of the truth itself.' This letter gives a glimpse of early diocesan pleasure and pain which we are glad indeed to get.

S. Jude is another bishop with an apostolic name whose epistle lacks the early attestation which might convince us of his being just that Jude. He, like S. John, had a dangerous heresy to manage, and he wrote a 'brief and vigorous' pastoral with that aim. His tactics are rather to put the immoral sectarians down than, like S. John, to transmute their error into truth. But he closes on a chord of Christian charity: 'But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And on some have mercy, who are in doubt; and some save, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.'

2 Peter is a repetition of Jude with amplification and addition. For three centuries the Church refused to admit it into the Canon. Then usage prevailed and what so many read was authorized, or perhaps imperfect claim of authorship and vulgar Greek and much superfluity were overlooked for the sake of the fine things which after all give this epistle its own unique value: 'That through God's precious and exceeding great promises ye may become partakers of the divine nature . . . looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God . . . and according to His promise we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'

This epistle is the one and only book of the New Testament which seems to claim for its author a person who was not its author. But that does not imply fraud or forgery. It was a recognized device in some kinds of literature. The Jewish apocalypses were regularly written in the name of some ancient hero, Enoch, Daniel, Moses. In the second Christian century a series of tracts were brought out in the name of S. Peter or about

S. Peter : a Gospel, an Apocalypse, a Peregrination ; ranging from theology through satire and heresy to adventure and romance. ‘ The Second Epistle of Peter ’ may be looked upon as the forerunner of the series, though incomparably superior to its followers.

The First Epistle of S. Peter stands apart from its six catholic companions and has already been considered in connection with Hebrews and the Apocalypse.

# XXIII

## *PASTORS AND MASTERS*

THE works touching books are two ; first libraries, which are as the shrines where all the relics of the ancient saints, full of true virtue, and that without delusion or imposture, are preserved and reposed : secondly, new editions of authors, with more correct impressions, more faithful translations, more profitable glosses, more diligent annotations, and the like. . . . All tending to quietness of life, and discharge of cares and troubles. . . . As for any particular commemorations, I call to mind what Cicero said, when he gave general thanks ; *Difficile non aliquem, ingratum quemquam praeterire.* Let us rather, according to the Scriptures, look unto that part of the race which is before us, than look back to that which is already attained.

FRANCIS LORD VERULAM :
*Of the Proficience and Advancement of Learning*, II.

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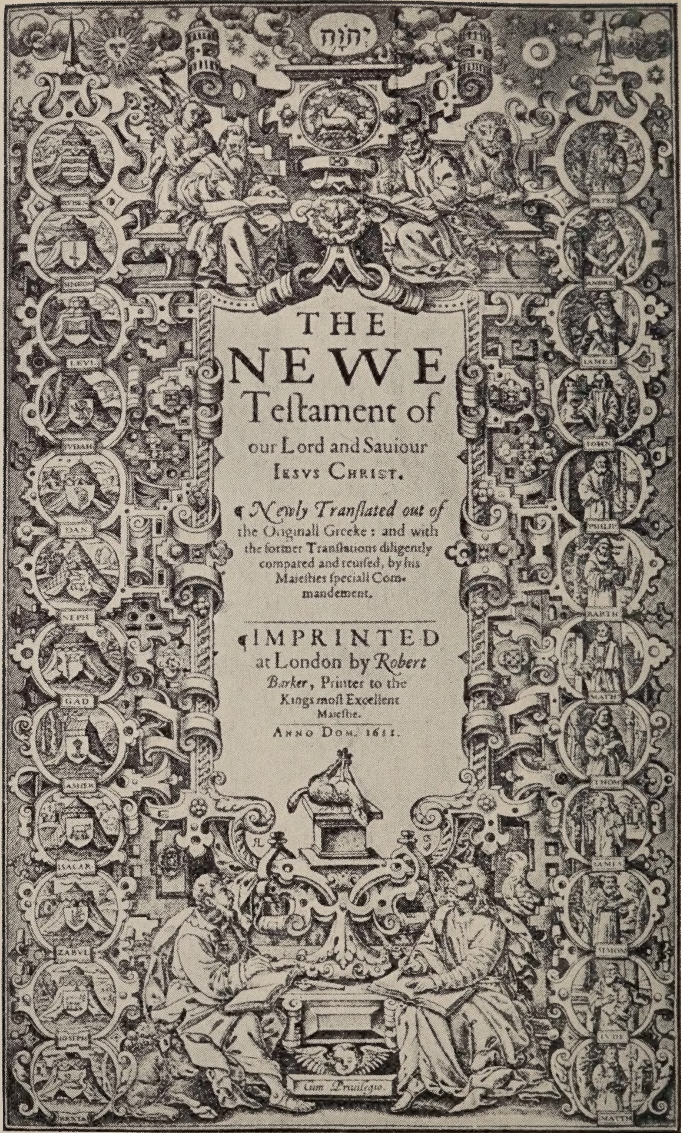
Our library is the collection of books which is called the New Testament. The chief of our studies is to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest these. We do that freely and hopefully, confident that these books ' full of virtue without delusion or imposture ' will bring much that is new as well as true, beyond our expectation, to the coming generations. But we do it modestly, still looking back to that which has been already attained, with quiet and grateful spirit of pupils towards their governours and teachers and spiritual pastors and masters.

I do not attempt a complete or formal list of aids to study : let Bacon and Cicero be my apology. I will only mention with some explanatory remarks those books which I have myself found formatory of my mind.

Since Westcott and Hort's *New Testament in Greek* appeared in 1881 I have always used it, and am satisfied that it is the best text we have, and in essentials represents the apostolic originals. The English *Revised Version* which was published in the same year represents that text sufficiently for general use, especially when its margin is attended to. Its true text constitutes the irrefragable claim of the Revised Version. In my own fallible judgement it is also the best translation ever made of the New Testament into any modern language.

The *Introduction to the New Testament in Greek*, written by Dr. Hort alone but in agreement with his brother editor, is to be read by all who honestly wish to understand the principles of textual criticism of the New Testament. The book is prophetic of later material and opinion ; you may read to disagree : but you have no right to disagree till you have read it and read it more than once. Repeated study has brought me larger enjoyment of the book as being a philosophic sketch of early Church history as well as a closely reasoned critical argument. To set Hort in his environment of other textual critics Dr. Burkitt's article in *Encyclopaedia Biblica* may be read, or Kenyon's *Textual Criticism of the New Testament*. And I must name Dr. Scrivener's *Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, a treasury of various learning, sympathies, and colloquial scholarship ; to myself the initiation into this mystery.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SIMON
IVDE
Cum Priuilegio.

THE
NEWE
Teſtament of
our Lord and Sauiour
Iesvs Christ.

¶ *Newly Tranſlated out of*
the Originall Greeke: and with
the former Tranſlations diligently
compared and reuiſed, by his
Maieſties ſpeciall Com-
mandement.

¶ IMPRINTED
at London by *Robert*
*Barker*, Printer to the
Kings moſt Excellent
Maieſtie.
Anno Dom. 1611.

Title-page of the New Testament in the Authorized Version, 1611.

Having named Dr. Hort I will collect at once all I have to say about his books. And it shall be concentrated into this. Read all. The Hulsean Lectures, *The Way, the Truth, and the Life*, are indispensable to the student of the Gospel according to S. John. The fragmentary commentaries on 1 Peter, James, and the Apocalypse ; the lectures on *Judaic Christianity* and *The Christian Ecclesia*, need of course to be supplemented but cannot, for a long while, be superseded ; even the little volume of lectures on the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* stimulates the student to realize the unbroken connection of apostolic with early Christian thought. And if biographies of scholars illuminate their occupation, the *Life and Letters* of Dr. Hort edited by his eldest son are the best of such annotated collections, a new model in biography seldom equalled since.

Read all, I would also say, of Dr. Lightfoot. His commentaries on Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, need supplementing but persist as classics. To read S. Paul with his notes is an initiation into Hellenistic Greek, and no ill preparation for the since discovered wealth of papyri. Notes, introductions, and dissertations are penetrative of the mind of S. Paul and the faith and order of the apostolic Church. In his later and perhaps even greater editions of S. Clement of Rome and S. Ignatius the outflow of apostolic into primitive Church is delineated with the full, firm knowledge of a historian.

As a general introduction or companion to the whole New Testament Dr. Moffatt's *Historical New Testament* has been frequently quoted in these pages. I have used it constantly in its second edition of 1901, and am never weary of it. I wish Dr. Moffatt would reprint it with moderate revision. His *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* I respect but do not enjoy as a companion. Nor do I like his very popular later version of the New Testament nearly so well as the old one in the *Historical New Testament.* His version of the Old Testament is a very different affair, worthy of comparison with Charles Doughty's *Arabia Deserta.* But Dr. Moffatt has given us another fine book in his commentary on Hebrews in Messrs. Clark's *International Critical Commentaries.* Like Bleek and Westcott in their commentaries he inaugurates an era in the exposition of Hebrews.

Dr. Westcott inaugurated his great career of neo-prophetic teaching with his essay of *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels.* It was to me a veritable introduction which I remember gratefully. The ' oral tradition ' which the essay explains and vivifies was rendered attractive by Dr. Arthur Wright, whose highly original commentary or edition of the Gospel according to S. Luke has never had a rival in my reading of that Gospel. Dr. Wright came after Dr. Westcott, but both belong to long ago, and their oral tradition has faded into a more comprehensive light. Yet the old fashions return with differences ; and Mr. Streeter has of late made fresh use of the oral tradition. However, the value of Westcott's work on the Gospels lies not in any particular of that kind. It is the Gospel message and the unity in diversity of the Spirit's working through the evangelists that still makes the book live. Another work, of maturer years, upon the Gospels is Westcott's *Commentary on S. John* : a famous commentary which somehow has never held my fancy. His commentary on S. John's Epistles, with its dissertation on Christian Art, is to my mind a deeper book ; and for the Gospel according to S. John he has given also guidance in what sometimes seems to me the best of all his didactic work, *The Gospel of Life.*

Dr. Swete came a little later than Westcott, Hort, and Lightfoot, and he had a forward-looking faith. Yet he too begins to belong to the past ; and in what may be styled his workmanship he represents that finished scholarship which is hardly aimed at now. Of such quality he has left two immortal commentaries, on the Apocalypse and on S. Mark, terse, carefully expressed, and with a delicate tact in weighing and interpreting his author's language, thoughts packed close and selected, no flourish, scrupulous taste--all finished: most reverently religious and serene—a scholar-churchman. Both books have done much for me : to read them is to be humbled and refreshed. If any clergyman had to prepare a sermon for plain folk, he could not do better than read a miracle or parable or part of the Passion narrative in Mark, think over it, and then repeat to his hearers what Swete has left within his mind.

Dr. Westcott and Dr. Hort.

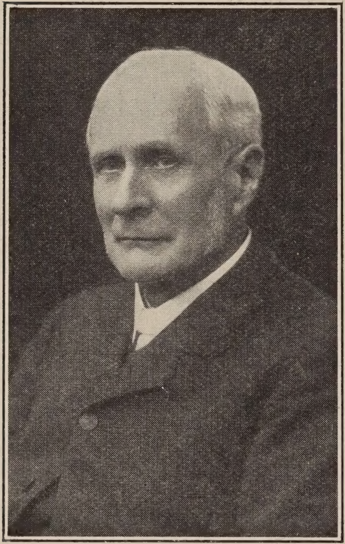
But we have travelled to-day far beyond Dr. Swete's 'fine edge of light.' Wellhausen has commented on Mark, plainly and briefly, but with a modern grasp as well as with unique personal genius. M. Loisy in his first edition of *Le Quatrième Évangile* made what is perhaps the best critical commentary that exists on John. But it is bold, startling to old-fashioned Bible-readers. One of the most useful—and genuinely religious—commentaries on the Gospels is Mr. Claude Montefiore's *Synoptic Gospels*. It is more than interesting to read a liberal but loyal Jew, sympathetic towards Christianity but defensively, on this subject. His commentary is useful for its large quotation of the latest criticism—English, French, and German. Reference has already been made in these pages to the introductory part of his lately published second edition as an excellent ' orientation ' of the student in the wide world of modern biblical and theological ideas.

A greater book, however, is *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, by Dr. Stanton. The first two volumes were published at the Cambridge University Press in 1903 and 1909. Dr. Stanton lived to complete the work by a third volume on the Fourth Gospel. This is a book which I have, for myself, grown gradually capable of appreciating. Now it seems to me the most solid work I know on its subject. The stock quotations from ancient evidence are taken as known. Their import is cautiously and firmly appraised as part of a wider whole. The reasoning is severe ; the style dry but masculine. The argument is conducted with utmost freedom and honesty ; and the moderately conservative result is impressive. There are no fancies or ' would be's. All is fact and necessary inference from fact.

Two books of Dr. Burkitt's on the Gospels claim attention ; *The Gospel History and its Transmission* and a small but very good and readable book—Dr. Burkitt is always readable—*The Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus*. Between the publications of these two Schweitzer's *Von Reimarus zu Wrede* appeared, a book which had remarkable effect upon Dr. Burkitt, not only as a scholar : his article on ' Apocalypses ' in *Cambridge Biblical Essays* will show what I mean, an article which appeals to conscience as much as to intellect.

Schweitzer has been spoken of in an earlier chapter. Here I will only add these two remarks. First, that excellent as his descriptions are of the varied series of lives of Christ, he does not seem to me to appreciate Renan fairly. Renan's *Vie de Jésus* impresses me more and more as a great and in large measure a true book, and it is the vestibule of a grand edifice, his *Origines* or story of Christianity from Galilee to the time of Marcus Aurelius. Secondly, that the Jewish Apocalypses which gave so much material to Schweitzer's critical construction, went far to form the novelty of the commentary on Romans by Sanday and Headlam, a commentary which began a new era in the exposition of S. Paul. Dr. Sanday was then turning from textual criticism to pure theology, and his books on the Gospels were widely influential : their cordial sympathy combined with courageous honesty and accomplished scholarship won a grateful public. These were preludes to a *Life of Christ* which never came to maturity. But a sketch written for Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* was published in separate form by Messrs. T. & T. Clark, and that has been a favourite companion to all who owe devotion to the author, and will continue so to be, though a younger generation will prefer Dr. Gore's careful *Jesus of Nazareth*. Lives of Christ tempt to an extended parenthesis. I check my pen and only repeat the titles of *Ecce Homo* and *Philochristus*.

Another writer who captured the hearts of his generation was Dr. Du Bose. He was like the ' scholar soldier and Venetian ' of *The Merchant of Venice*. Fighting in the Southern Army in the American War he experienced a religious conversion of a rather uncommon—a quiet, deep kind. This set him meditating on S. Paul's epistles while still on campaign. The outcome was a treatise, of moderate length, philosophical but unpretending, highly original, on S. Paul. At intervals in the academic career on which he presently entered, he wrote three books, on the Gospels, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and S. John. And, perhaps best of all, near the end of his life he conducted a kind of Academic Retreat for his old pupils, and from the allocutions there delivered composed a meditative autobiography — the Prophet's Book. The Dean of Wells' Ephesians has been spoken of in a former chapter. I name it here again that Every Man may read it, and to commemorate my own gratitude. This commentary launched my thought into a wide new sea.


Dr. Sanday.

Dr. Anderson Scott's book on S. Paul, *Christianity according to S. Paul*, must be mentioned with ample respect and gratitude ; it is the latest and almost the completest exposition of the apostle's character and faith. Another of these general expositions, of much older date, must be mentioned with a very heartfelt personal appreciation, Dr. A. B. Bruce's *Epistle to the Hebrews, the first Apology for Christianity* (T. & T. Clark, 1899). And I pass on to a commentary (in the *Inter-*

*national Critical Series*) on the Epistles of S. Peter and S. Jude by Dr. Bigg.

The critical decisions of this commentary may win no wide approval. The learning, style, and originality of the notes will delight all readers with a particle of taste. But the peculiar value of the book lies in a few pages of the Introduction in which Dr. Bigg explains the complementary temperaments of the Mystic and the Disciplinarian. In the course of this argument he remarks that the commentator on the New Testament ought to go beyond the immediate field of evidence and illustration, and use such matter of the mind as Wesley's *Journal*. That is a pregnant hint. If we would penetrate the meaning that criticism, necessarily but only in its ancillary capacity, keeps within its proper lines, excluding fancy and verbiage, we must co-ordinate language, history, external evidence, with all the cognate science of human thought ; and the origins with their issues. Creed and doctrine bear upon the apostolic developments from which they spring.

Thus, reading Hebrews, we should also read Dr. Bethune Baker's *Nestorius and his place in the history of Christian doctrine*, where the Bazaar of Heraclides and Nestorius' illuminating sermon on Hebrews are set forth.

The Oxford philosopher F. H. Bradley in his *Appearance and Reality* ; Dr. Inge and Plotinus ; Dr. D'Arcy, the Primate of Ireland, and the Berkeleian philosophy which he re-creates, are most needful for the study of S. John. At least as needful is Tennyson, especially but not exclusively in his *In Memoriam*. And Every Man will be wise—and happy too—if he reads Plato himself : let him take the *Republic* in Davies and

Vaughan's fine version, so easily available in Macmillan's *Golden Treasury* series.

The New Testament in the scholar-fathers—Origen and Jerome : in the Middle Ages—Alcuin : at the Renaissance—Erasmus and Colet : what themes are there. We may not linger. But we by no means may forget that a Renaissance of thought is taking place to-day, and that the theologian must find much to enlarge his New Testament study in Dr. Whitehead's (*Science and the Modern World*) and Professor Eddington's Gifford Lectures, *The Nature of the Physical World*.

Nor can we ignore the modern breadth and earnestness in Ethical thought. F. H. Bradley's inimitable and so readable *Ethical Studies* have lately been reprinted. And I would like to renew interest in Dr. St. John Parry's essay on the Epistle of S. James, in which the influence is discussed of that epistle on the serious ethical problem produced by the Christian supersession of the Jewish Law.

I have written this chapter like a letter, *currente calamo*. And now, dear Every Man, let me end it by naming one more of my heroes and then adding, with I assure you the modesty of experience, a piece or two of advice. In the select first class of books I would put E. A. Abbott's five volumes of the *Fourfold Gospel* (Cambridge University Press, 1913–17). He shows how John goes back from Luke's corrections to Mark's plain tales, and repeats Mark's facts but not as mere facts, deepening the miraculous with the reason of the Spirit. That is the theme. The work is massive, erudite, and rich in grace. 'A long book a great evil,' said the Greek Gnomic : but on the whole he was mistaken. Read great books not handbooks. That is my advice and experience. Sometimes a great book is a short one. Generally it is large, often difficult. But one such book mastered, or being by degrees mastered, is worth a hundred epitomes of information. The books that enlarge our view, rouse our imagination, refresh our mind, are the books to make friends ; or rather to make their authors our friends, for reading is the conversation of souls. We may only understand in part. We may disagree and criticize. If we agree too easily, it only means that we hear no news, are learning nought. Conrad, in a letter to Mr. Galsworthy, gives away the secret from the author's point of view. ' Scepticism, the tonic of minds, the agent of truth, the way of art and salvation ! In a book you should love the idea and be scrupulously faithful to your conception of life. There lies the honour of the writer, not in the fidelity to his personages. You must never allow them to decoy you out of yourself. As against your people you must preserve an attitude of perfect indifference, the part of creative power. A creator must be indifferent : because directly the " Fiat " has issued from his lips, there are the creatures made in his image that will try to drag him down from his eminence—and belittle him by their worship.' Translate this into the sphere of theology, and recognize the authors who present their very selves to you, imparting a knowledge, a faith, and a philosophy of life which they have made their own.

Finally, this. Passages are regularly quoted from very early witnesses who were themselves originally quoted by Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*. Be not content with secondary acquaintance. Read these passages in their context. Read Eusebius' *History* through, as you may so easily do now in Dr. Kirsopp Lake's edition with translation in the ' Loeb Series of Greek and

Latin authors.' Thus from that admirable 'father of church history' you will gain a spacious view of the Church in the first centuries, gathering and shaping its New Testament, and settling its own faith and life upon the evangelic witness thereby preserved, and hence expatiating for the salvation of the world.

# XXIV

## *EPILOGUE*

THE New Testament begins with three Gospels in which the life and teaching of our Lord are recorded. His birth is announced with reticent reverence. The narrative culminates in a longer chapter of the Passion and Crucifixion and Resurrection. His disciples know, having seen and spoken with Him, that He lives ; and so they pass from visible companionship to carry His good tidings of life to others.

The third of these Gospels, Luke, runs into its second volume, Acts, the beginning of Church History. The Holy Spirit comes upon the disciples ; the Spirit of Jesus is with them. S. Paul carries the Gospel to Gentiles in Syria, Asia, Greece, and Rome. In the three Gospels S. Peter and the disciples have confessed their Lord as the Christ. Paul, who has seen the living Lord Jesus in vision, thinks out what that confession of faith means, and fashions a creed, profound and continuous with his Pharisaic faith as a Jewish churchman. Jesus the Christ the Son of God, proved and defined by the power of His Resurrection, has been with God and in God from everlasting, is author and restorer of all creation, and dwells by inmost spiritual communion with His disciples through all generations. Paul himself has been crucified with Him, yet lives : yet he himself no longer lives but Christ lives in him : and so likewise with all Christ's faithful servants ; their life is hid with Christ in God.

This is to know Christ not after the flesh, not in the superficial way men know one another in merely outward accident and relationship, but as spirit knows spirit, deep answers to deep, eternal hearts to eternal God. And thus also Paul would fain have men know men : for Jesus Christ Himself is human, born into the natural world according to the flesh, to transform its nature.

That paradox, or reconciliation, keeps Paul's faith sane and practical. He founds and orders churches. He disciplines the wild, immoral Gentiles. He knows no way of walking by the Spirit but the way of a good life. But he knows the only impulse of a good life and the only means to live thus is the Spirit, which is Christian love ; love of God Who has forgiven, of Jesus Christ Who died for man's reconciliation with God ; love of men to men which is the forgetting and the sacrifice of self in plain devotion to the brother for whom Christ died.

Then Paul died for love of the brothers and his Master Christ. We have just a glimpse of his last hours in one of the outlying epistles of the New Testament. The main story passes into another phase.

The whole world is disturbed : fear and violence everywhere. The Jews revolt from Rome. Jerusalem is besieged, suffers, falls, and the temple is destroyed. The Roman Empire shakes, emperors are murdered, new emperors persecute those who seem dangerous to their state. The Christians face persecution. They turn to memories of Jesus, His Passion, His example, His promise of coming in glory. And they recognize a meaning in that promise other than the marvel which inherited Judaic tradition had hitherto taught them. These days of extreme trial are extreme, 'last days.' He comes now: comes as captain and as friend. He comes in glory as He came in the humiliation of 'the days of His flesh.' The twain are one. To the divine Lord glory is in humiliation. The cross is a liturgic sacrifice efficacious in its victim-priest, the sacrament of entrance into the presence of God. The flesh, the obscure ministry, the lowly person, were the true manifestation of a purer deity than His disciples had hitherto discerned. To follow the example of their Lord and be made like Him, is the full profession of the Christian. Not quite like Paul they go back to Galilee and renew the simple Gospel preached and believed in Galilee. But listening again to that simple Gospel they perceive its exceeding richness. The splendour of Paul's doctrine of the Person of Christ is tempered to a more suffused and glowing mystery :

> Nos ubi primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis
> Illic sera rubens accendit lumina vesper.
>
> For him first dawn with panting coursers breathed :
> From the red evening their late lamps are lit.

In the English Prayer Book the Epistle for Christmas is the grand rhetoric of Hebrews, that evening glow of Greek : the Gospel is the Prologue of John, the simplicity of a new language and the nascent light of a new dawn. 'In the beginning was the Word . . . and the Word was with God and the Word was God . . . and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ; and we beheld His glory, as of a father's only-begotten son.'

Now we return to Galilee indeed. We read again the story told in the three first Gospels, but it is interpreted, enriched, intensified. The days of His flesh are there, but there is more than a record of the Saviour's deeds. What we felt as we read before ; what those who wrote the earlier record evidently felt and half expressed, is now expressed. We are beneath the surface, where friends unite with friends in Spirit, and everything that happens is a ‘ sign.’ That in no degree diminishes the moving reality of the story—of friends not personages, of divine action through the words and deeds of men, and through the leadership of one man Who is absolute in His trustful humanity : *Ecce homo*. And as we follow Him in this Gospel we know, what all the earlier books of the New Testament have gradually prepared us to know, that in this man, only-begotten, most loving and beloved, God is revealed : ‘ My Lord and my God.’

‘ Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those things which have been fully established among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word ; it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty concerning those things wherein thou wast instructed.’

So wrote S. Luke the scholar and historian. And with just his historian’s and scholar’s ambition a hundred have since taken the like task in hand ; to collect and criticize evidence, to be accurate, to set all in order, to compose a Life of Jesus, by which we may know what is certain in the general instruction we have inherited about Him, our Lord Jesus. And these Lives of Jesus are rightly essayed. The Gospel according to S. John was the first of such Lives in succession to the primitive Narratives ; and in John our Lord promises that in time to come men shall do greater works than His own temporal works, and the Spirit shall guide them gradually into truth. Our critical history is now an advanced science, and we have means for order and accuracy which former generations lacked.

Yet we may perhaps linger awhile, considering what kind of certainty we seek. The early models are worth attention, not only for material. Our critical analysis has cleared away not a little superstition. So did S. Paul when he resolved no longer to know Christ after the flesh. But he effected that quietly, saying little in denial, substituting great truth for lesser. Our homely personal stories of the Ministry, with local colour, picturing our Lord as one of ourselves, fill up what the evangelists left sketched, and the character of their sketch was majesty, and all centred in One Who appeared supreme, dominating, often lonely, too wholly engaged in a tremendous destiny to be worthy of these lesser attentions—'Are we to expect anything but glimpses and ruins of the divinest?' Their story moves onwards to the Passion and the Cross, a solemn mystery. As we read them again and again we cannot but acknowledge that this is the only way, however we may be able to make that way more certain.

And we spend pains upon the order. So, said Luke, would he. But his idea of order was hardly ours. He does indeed begin the second division of his narrative, or rather the first chapter of his Narrative after his Tales of Introduction, with some dates and names which serve to set the Gospel into a place in the history of the empire. So much he does; then lets it alone. The other evangelists do nothing to that end, and much of the universal power of their work springs out of just that strange freedom from limitations of time and space which gives it wings—wings rather than foundations.

And—what is being critically noticed at this very day—we cannot stand again, for all the help of the evangelists, by the side of those eye-witnesses whom Luke examined. In the three first Gospels, as in Paul, as in John, we look back upon the days of Galilee through the eyes of the worshipping Church. Is this a loss? Is it not the essential condition of accuracy in this history, if this history be true? Its truth grows upon nearly all who read it often, ponder it, and face the facts of life in their own environment with endurance, pity, and hope. There is 'the doom of reason writ in man's soul and heart.' And at any rate this history falls into insignificance unless it preserve its mystery or sacrament, with the sensibility indeed but also with the never attained Beyond of Sacrament.

'Activity is directed to determinate ends in the known world, yet it is activity in the known world . . . the world, as known, transcends the subject which is cognisant of it. . . . Nature exhibits a philosophy of evolution . . . but as the outcome of a wider evolution beyond nature itself and within which nature is but a limited mode.' So Dr. Whitehead writes in *Science and the Modern World*, and his oracular foreshadowings recall the Gospel according to S. John. There the key-word is Eternal: in the quasi-philosophic language of our modern talk it would be Absolute. And perhaps we may get a clearer insight into the meaning of 'Very God and very man' if we think of our Lord Jesus not as the culmination of evolution, an emergent occasion in the progress of the races, but rather as a Man who trusts God absolutely, whose will is absolutely one with the will of His, and our, Father in heaven.

The best plan for a life of Christ is that proposed in the Litany. Here are the chapter headings under a possible title for the whole :

### The Work of Jesus the Redeemer

1. The mystery of the holy Incarnation.
2. The holy Nativity and Circumcision.
3. The Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation.
4. The Agony and Bloody Sweat.
5. The Cross and Passion.
6. The precious Death and Burial.
7. The glorious Resurrection and Ascension.
8. The Coming of the Holy Ghost.

These titles are typical and dogmatic, opening a vista to devout imagination. They need translation into the prose of our day. Thus there is room in this plan for critical history and practical metaphysics. But proportion is kept. The things which matter to a man who fears God mark the broad lines. And the imagination is of the kind which opens the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the author sets us in imagination by the throne of God and shows us thence—his hypothesis and conviction—the course of creation and history gathering concretely into the Incarnation, Sacrifice, and Union of man with God. Even a large book might be composed upon this plan. And it might be full of reality and pathos, a genuine representation of the Christian Saga.

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,

. . . . .

Thou seemest human and divine,
  The highest, holiest manhood Thou :
  Our wills are ours, we know not how ;
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.

## SOME APPROXIMATE DATES

(With acknowledgements to *The Historical New Testament.*)

| *Emperors.* | *Gospel History.* | *Documents, etc.* |
|---|---|---|
| Augustus, 30 B.C–A.D. 14 | Birth of Jesus, 6 B.C. | Cicero, 106–43 B.C.<br>Virgil, 73–19 B.C. |
| Tiberius, 14–37 | Crucifixion of Jesus, 29<br>Paul a Christian, 30 | Philo |
| Caligula, 37–41 | Paul's first tour and Council at Jerusalem, 49 | |
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| Nero, 54–68 | Paul's voyage to Rome, 59–60<br>Burning of Rome and Persecution of Christians, 64 | Gospel of Mark, 65 |
| Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, 69 | | ? 1 Peter, Hebrews, Apocalypse |
| Vespasian, 69–79 | Siege and sack of Jerusalem by Titus, 70 | Josephus, 37–100 |
| Titus, 79–81 | | ? Acts, Gospels of Luke and Matthew |
| Domitian, 81–96 | | |
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# A NOTE ABOUT MAPS

THE Story of the New Testament is here illustrated by three maps, and maps are so useful that a few brief notes about these may perhaps be allowed. Maps elucidate narrative, save time, stimulate imagination, help memory, paint sequences of event and thought, bring order into the chaos of detail. Maps are a shorthand of rhetoric ; abstractions, pictures, records, even in a manner prophecies.

The map here given of Palestine in the time of Christ is shaded. Thus the physical traits of the face of Palestine are presented, mountains, plains, deep gorge of Jordan, hilly desert of the south, forests and snow-topped mountains in the north, the plain of Sharon and the low road along the coast. Then Greek names of cities in Decapolis, Hebrew names around Jerusalem, recall history and suggest the character of peoples : Caesarea Philippi raises a vision of Grecian architecture to the eye of the mind, and an immaterial vision of Roman authority and a provincial tetrarch's half barbaric splendour, the contrast of Hellenistic and Jewish faith and civilization. Thus the map, brooded over, comes to life as a picture of scenery, an acted drama of humanities.

So much—by way of suggestion, not as rigorous exposition—for the largest of our maps. But in the corner is a sketched miniature, a plan of 'Tetrarchies, etc.,' with no lines of longitude, few names, only slight indications of feature. This kind of map is in itself almost a picture, an imaginative etching, stimulative by virtue of its intellectual economy of line. Latitude and longitude, and the indication of the Roman way running along the level coast to the Mediterranean and the imperial headquarters at Caesarea and in the other direction to Lebanon and the gates of the Orient, are like Luke's attempt at the opening of his narrative of the Ministry to set the Gospel in position relatively to the contemporary world. The sketch map is like his Gospel of the Nativity and Boyhood, or Mark's Gospel throughout. It makes us see what the written story tells, how private this Holy Land lay within the Roman province, how timeless, as it were, and placeless the Ministry was, and therefore it is eternal and universal.

On the whole that makes good reason for the map of S. Paul's journeys being merely a sketch map. Of course this makes the journeys easy to follow, but it does also bring vividly—vividness is the virtue of a map—the missionary's uncompromising ethics in his invasion of the Gentile territory, and the newness of the Gospel which he carried to a surprised though expectant people : one touch of nature makes the whole world kin, and yet the Resurrection and Judgement-day came to Athenian ears as if from another world. The wide spreading lines, yet purely lines, of the sketch map typify that fancy : and map reading is an exercise of delightful fancy.

A map of the whole Roman empire would have illustrated the first chapter of our book, 'The expectant world,' but more space was needed than the spread of two pages if such a map was to be intelligible. The loss matters little. What is given implies the rest. And here the idea of prophecy comes in. What is given implies the future expansion of the Gospel area. Spain—Paul's certainly in hope and actually his in tradition—is here cut off by the boundary line which passes through its midst. But in maps boundary lines are horizons, and we dream true dreams of countries beyond. Spain and Britain and a larger Gaul ; church history after apostolic history ; all that is really in this map. Shift it to the left, and bring Ephesus into the centre, here occupied by Rome dominating the great western practical and catholic Church. But Ephesus means John and the second outflow of the Gospel, in its pervasive and platonic temper, as we know it in the fourth Gospel and shall partly recognize it in three centuries of Greek theology. Africa too : here a blank, but soon it shall be filled by Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, and the earliest versions of the Greek New Testament. The map prophesies to the eye of history and of theology : and all is in continual movement, like the long light of a summer day.

The third map elucidates a troublesome chapter in New Testament criticism, the northern or southern address of the Epistle to the Galatians. That problem is briefly treated in our book. The map will compensate the brevity. Still more will it help those who are curious to pursue the question through the complete discussions of Lightfoot, Ramsay, and Kirsopp Lake. The map will abstract, simplify, set a logical order ; it will truly throw light. It will form and preserve a summary ; it will strengthen clear memory.

So will map-making serve thinking of all sorts and again and again. A lecture, sermon, argument, or narrative ; development of doctrine ; sources, flow, and expanding influence of a creed, law, or philosophy ; may be described in words as a river (cf. Introduction to this *Story of the New Testament*), but quicker, clearer, and more vividly by a few-lined map. The map suggests movement, as in Alice's journey from square to square of the ' real ' chess-board in *Through the Looking Glass*, or the ' Leaps '—*Salite*—from circle to circle in Dante's *Paradiso*. Take the map here printed of S. Paul's life ; underline the names of the ' great churches ' through which Mr. Streeter gathers his complex lines of tradition : how quickly you take and how firmly you remember the meaning of his book, or of such a summary of it as is made in the fifth and sixth chapters of our Story.

Those who compose lectures, essays, sermons, must doubtless write at last in full ; but they will make best preparation by ' mapping out ' their purpose graphically. And the craftmanship is easy. No drawing is required; only line making. Get a view : put it into lines boldly, without fumbling. Do not retouch : if the map comes not quite right, tear it up and do it again. Thus your thought strains to reality. Socrates told just a homely truth to Phaedrus when he said that sight is the keenest of our bodily senses and that the idea comes to earth shining in clearness through the aperture of sense.

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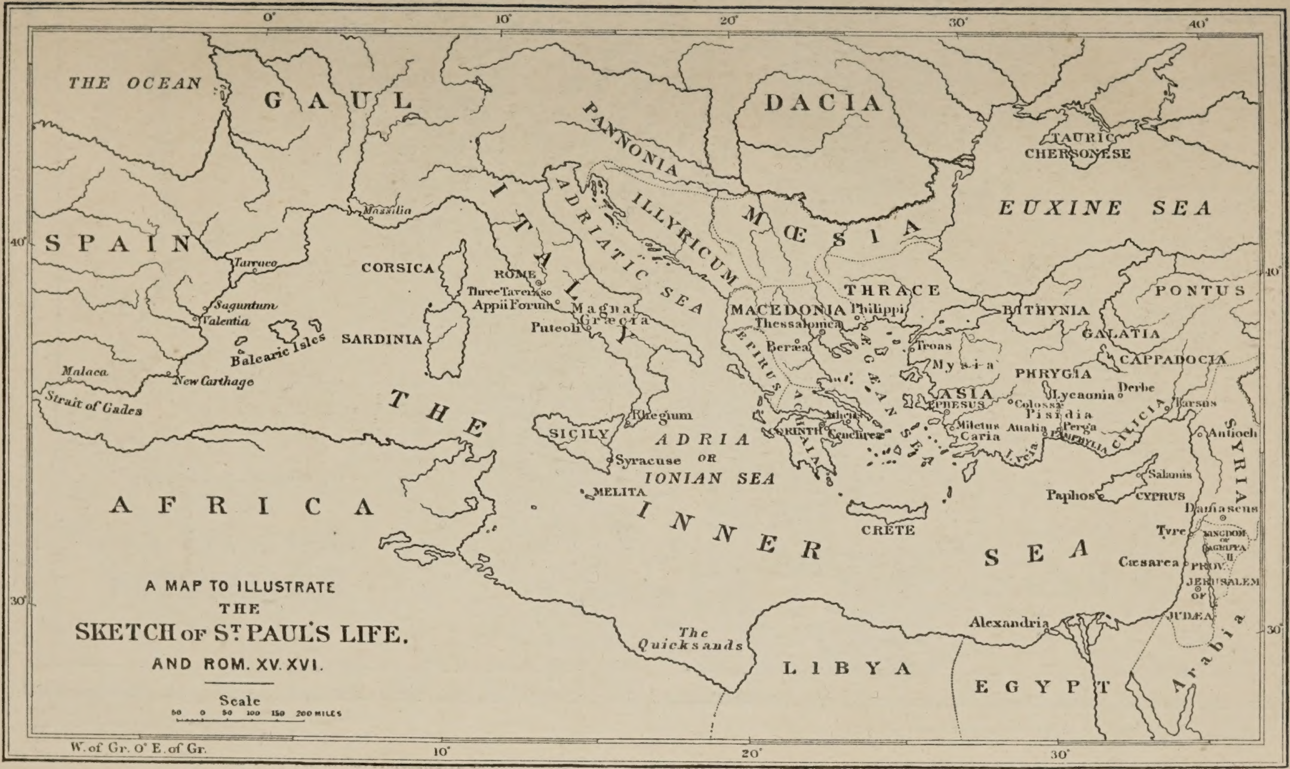

0°
10°
20°
30°
40°
THE OCEAN
GAUL
SPAIN
Massilia
Tarraco
Saguntum
Valentia
New Carthage
Malaca
Strait of Gades
Balearic Isles
CORSICA
SARDINIA
ITALY
ROME
Three Taverns
Appii Forum
Puteoli
Magna Græcia
Rhegium
SICILY
Syracuse
MELITA
PANNONIA
ILLYRICUM
ADRIATIC SEA
DACIA
MŒSIA
THRACE
MACEDONIA
Philippi
Thessalonica
Beræa
EPIRUS
ACHAIA
CORINTH
Cenchreæ
Athens
ADRIA OR IONIAN SEA
ÆGEAN SEA
CRETE
EUXINE SEA
TAURIC CHERSONESE
BITHYNIA
PONTUS
GALATIA
CAPPADOCIA
PHRYGIA
Troas
Mysia
ASIA
EPHESUS
Colossæ
Miletus
Caria
Lycia
Attalia
Perga
Pisidia
PAMPHYLIA
Lycaonia
Derbe
CILICIA
Tarsus
Antioch
SYRIA
Damascus
Tyre
Cæsarea
KINGDOM OF AGRIPPA II.
PROV. OF JUDÆA
JERUSALEM
Salamis
CYPRUS
Paphos
THE INNER SEA
AFRICA
The Quicksands
LIBYA
Alexandria
EGYPT
Arabia
Scale
50 0 50 100 150 200 MILES
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SKETCH OF ST. PAUL'S LIFE.
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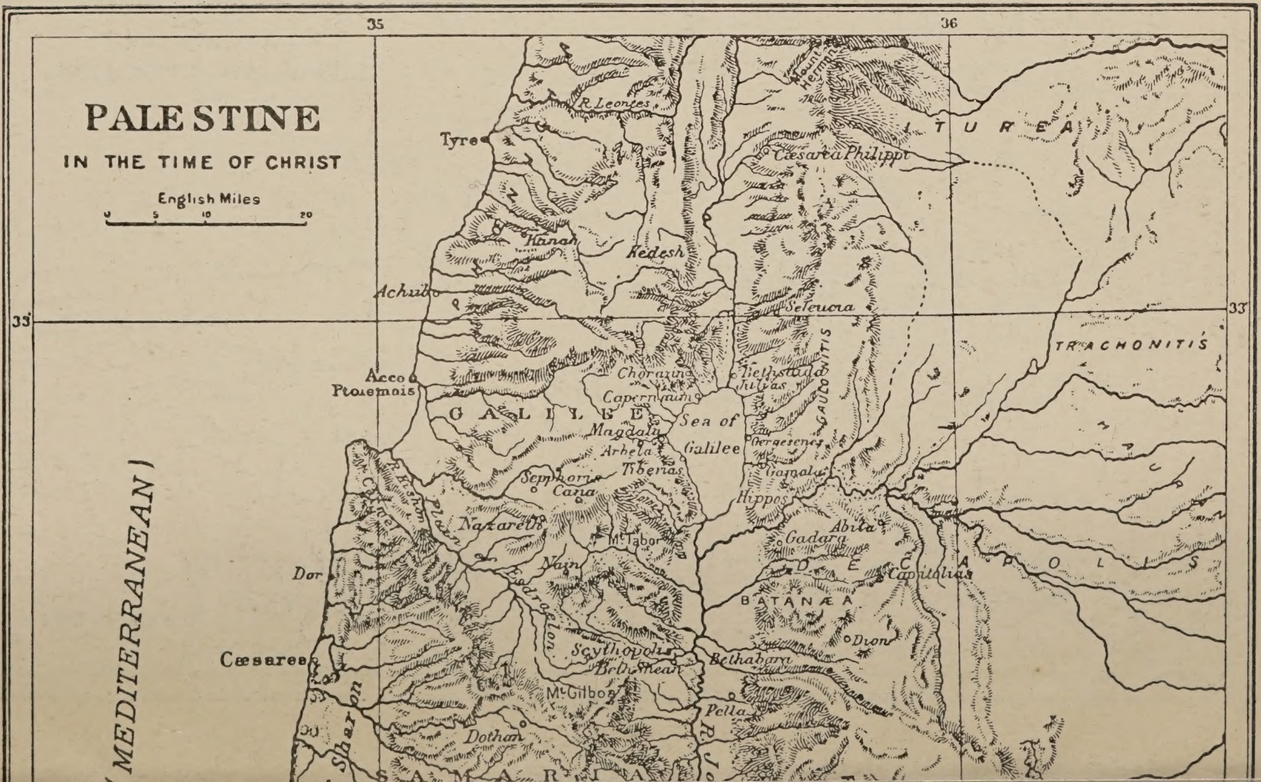

PALESTINE

IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

English Miles
0
5
10
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33
Tyre
R. Leontes
Mount Hermon
ITUREA
Cæsarea Philippi
Kanah
Kedesh
Achzib
Seleucia
TRACHONITIS
Acco
Ptolemais
Chorazin
Bethsaida Julias
Capernaum
GAULONITIS
GALILEE
Sea of Galilee
Magdala
Gergesenes
Arbela
Tiberias
Gamala
Sepphoris
Cana
Hippos
R. Kishon
Carmel
Plain
Nazareth
Mt. Tabor
Abila
Gadara
DECAPOLIS
Capitolias
Nain
Dor
Esdraelon
BATANÆA
Dion
Cæsarea
Scythopolis
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Pella
Sharon
Dothan
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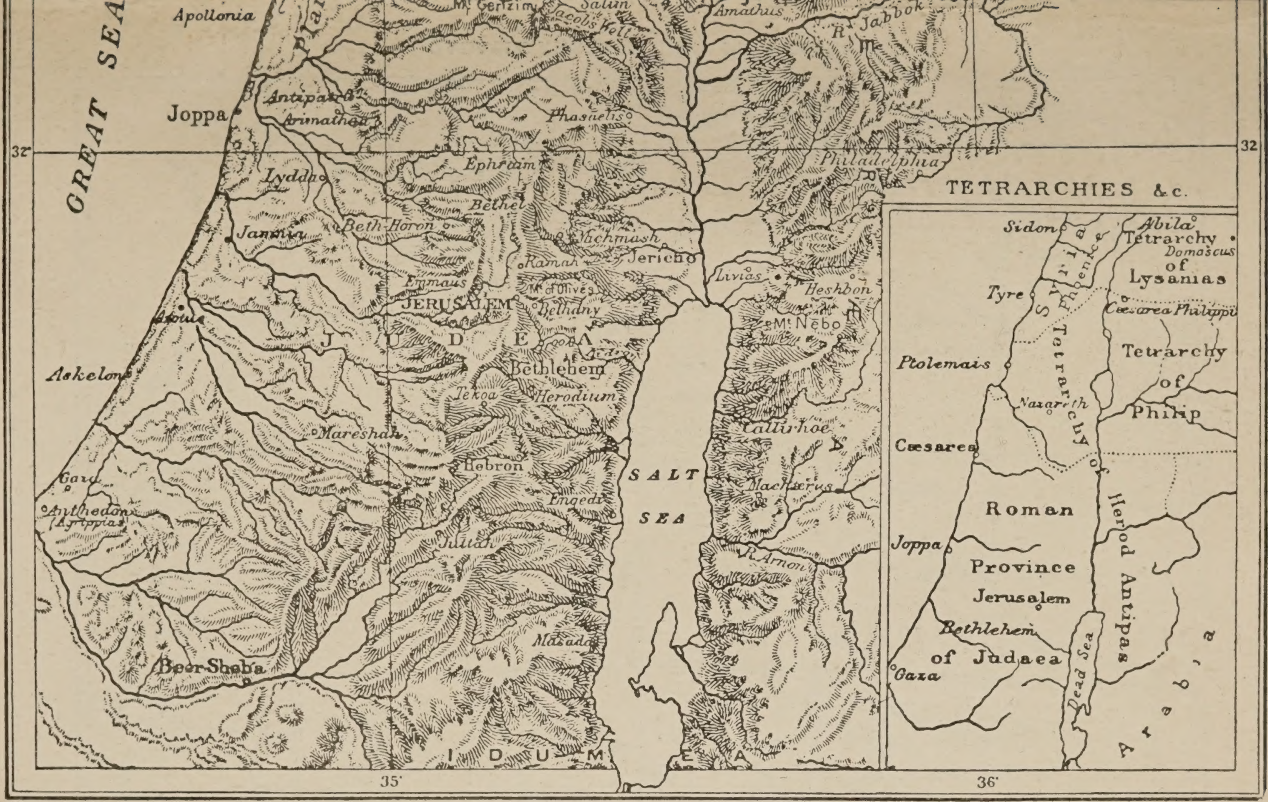
GREAT SEA
Apollonia
Joppa
Antipatris
Arimathaea
Lydda
Jamnia
Azotus
Askelon
Gaza
Anthedon
(Agrippias)
Beer-Sheba
Mt Gerizim
Salim
Jacob's Well
Phasaelis
Ephraim
Bethel
Beth-Horon
Michmash
Ramah
Jericho
Emmaus
JERUSALEM
Mt of Olives
Bethany
J U D E A
Bethlehem
Tekoa
Herodium
Mareshah
Hebron
Engedi
Juttah
Masada
I D U M E A
SALT SEA
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R. Jabbok
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Livias
Heshbon
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TETRARCHIES &c.
Sidon
Abila
Tetrarchy
Damascus
of
Lysanias
Tyre
Syria Phoenice
Caesarea Philippi
Tetrarchy
of
Philip
Ptolemais
Nazareth
Tetrarchy of Herod Antipas
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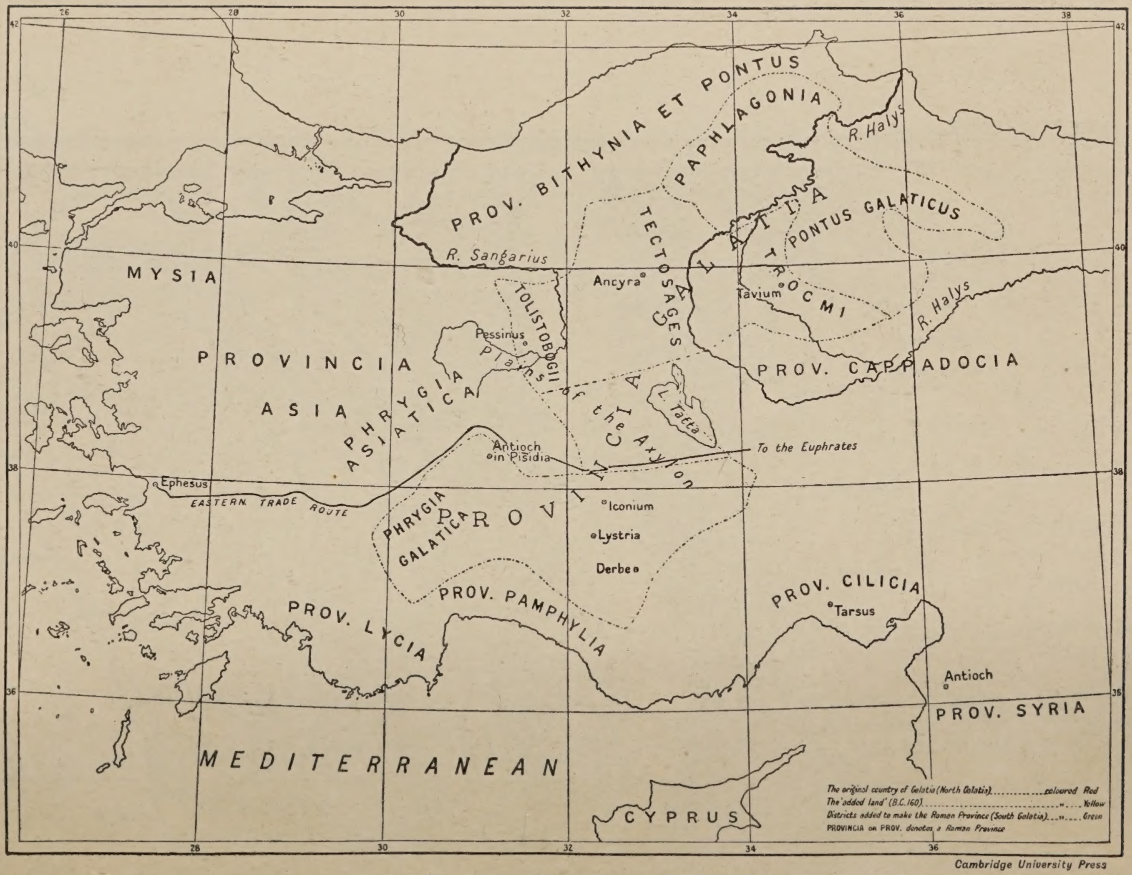
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